

Bible History. - "At the period Bible history was written, and even down to the present times, the world, so called, was merely that portion of it then known to the writers; and therefore we may presume that the writer of Bible history, in speaking of the deluge covering the whole world, and of only one family being saved, spoke simply of the limited portion of the world then known to him, and of the fate of that portion of the white race from whom he claimed descent.

The same reasoning applies equally to man, there being too decided a difference among various of the races ever to reconcile it to reason that all have sprung from the same stock. The writer of the early portions of the Bible, which treat of this matter, while giving the whole history of his race, would naturally presume his first parents to be the first parents of all the races of the earth, from the whole portion of the latter known to him being occupied almost solely by his own kindred stock, and with whose history only it may be supposed he was acquainted." p. 143 On the Motions of the Earth & Heavenly Bodies as explained by Electro-Magnetic Attraction & repulsion, and on the Conception, growth & decay of Man, & Cause & treatment of his Diseases, as referable to Galvanic Action. By P. Cunningham, Surgeon R.N. author of "Two years in New South Wales." in-8 --- London 1834

The sacred books of the world, arranged in order of antiquity, are the Vedas (the sacred books of the Brahmans), the maxims of Confucius, the Bible, the writings of the Buddhists, The Talmud, the Koran, and the Book of Mormons. All these are in use at the present day.

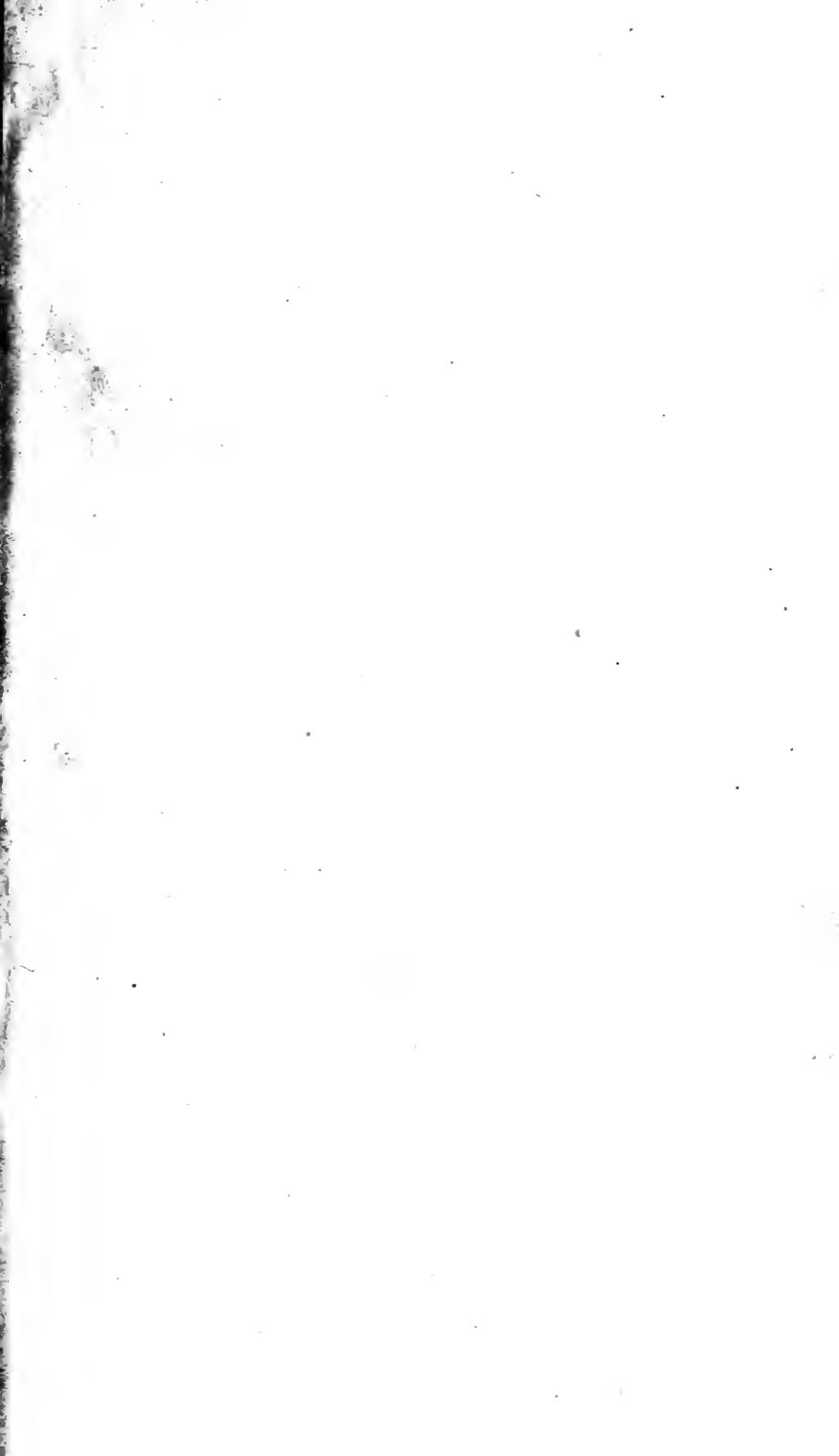
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THE
FREE-THINKER'S
INFORMATION FOR THE PEOPLE.

“ Let all have full liberty to teach and maintain whatever opinions they choose.”

MELANCTHON.

“ He is a freeman whom the truth makes free,
And all are slaves beside.”

COWPER.

V. II.

LONDON :

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FREE-THINKERS' INFORMATION FOR THE PEOPLE.

"LET ALL HAVE FULL LIBERTY TO TEACH AND MAINTAIN WHATEVER OPINIONS THEY
MAY CHOOSE."—*Melancthon.*

NUMBER I.

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MOSAIC ACCOUNT OF THE CREATION AND FALL OF MAN.

THE description of the creation and the fall of man, commonly known by the name of the "Mosaic account," is contained in the first three chapters of the Book of Genesis. Moses, a Jewish Law-giver, having been represented as the author of the book, the account has always gone by his name. This statement of the origin of things, being the foundation of a most gigantic and extensively organized system of superstition, and one which has been a great stumbling-block in the path of human improvement, we purpose, in this treatise, to exhibit some of the most glaring absurdities and defects contained in this "account," and to prove by scientific induction, the utter impossibility, according to the canons of rational criticism, of the Bible statement being true.

The first chapter of Genesis commences with what some divines have called, the most sublime passage on record, but which to our uninspired understanding, seems but an inflated common place exclamation, explaining nothing. For we are told, "In the beginning, God created the heaven and the earth," leaving us entirely at a loss to know what the Deity had been doing prior to this event, and the circumstances which had induced God at this particular juncture "from an eternity of idleness," to arise and frame the fair fabric of creation. We are next informed, that "the earth was without form and void, and darkness was upon the face of the deep, and the spirit of God moved on the face of the waters." From this it would appear, that after the "beginning" and the "creation of the heaven and the earth," the earth was without form and void, or in other words, the earth did and did not exist; for how a thing could be "without form and void," and yet have a specific existence, is one of those theological puzzles entirely beyond our comprehension. If the earth existed, however crude and mis-shapen, it must have had form; and as for being void, it is impossible if it filled space at all, for the meaning of the term "void," is, to be blank, empty, non-existent. We have, therefore, a palpable contradiction in the two first verses, for if creation took place "in the beginning," according to the first verse, the second verse must be untrue; and if the second verse be true, the first one must be false, for the work of creation could not have taken place when

the "earth was without form and void." So, that in whatever way we view it, the orthodox believer is on the horns of a dilemma.

The book next proceeds, in the third and succeeding verses, to detail the work of creation. Light is created, and is "divided from darkness" by some chemical process, and the "light is called day, and the darkness night." This is the first day's work; and, if this be the origin of light, Deity must have been enveloped in darkness from all eternity up to this time. The second day's work is the division of the waters, by means of a "firmament," which, in the language of the text, was to divide "the waters which were under the firmament from the waters which were above the firmament;" the partition, or firmament, being called heaven, and with the creation of which ended the second day. The "divine historian," in this lame attempt to explain the "dividing of the waters," adopts an opinion almost universal in ancient times, namely, that the concave sphere which appears to surround our earth, studded with innumerable stars, was a solid body of crystal, or some other bright material, but which had the heavenly property of being indestructible; and that the rain which fell to the earth oozed through the crystal sphere by means of holes or "windows," regulated by the Deity. Hence the division of the waters above the firmament from the waters below. No wonder, then, that Moses, or whoever else wrote the Bible account of creation, following the popular notion of the times, adopted this hypothesis; still, it argues gross ignorance of the principles, of evaporation, and the formation of clouds and rain, all of which should have been known by the writer; and says little for the dependance to be placed in any other of the statements of the "inspired" historian.

The labour of the third day is, the gathering together of the waters into one place, and the formation of dry land, the waters being called seas, and the dry land, earth; after which grass, and herbs, and fruit trees are commanded to spring up. The truth of this passage will come to be discussed when we go into a general exposition of the *modus operandi* of creation, and the origin of sea and land.

On the fourth day lights are set in the

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heavens "to give light upon the earth;" "two great lights, the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night; the stars he made also." How light could exist the previous three days and nights, without sun, moon, or stars, requires some explanation. We know, at the present day, that the existence of these luminaries is necessary for day and night, and light. It appears, however, according to the "inspired" narrative, that light was divided from darkness on the first day, and day and night formed, although no sun, moon, or stars existed until the fourth day. How was this accomplished? Not a word of information is given to explain the difficulty; for, if light and darkness, day and night, existed from the first day, the creation of the sun, moon, and stars, was a work of supererogation; and if day and night depended upon the latter, as at the present time, the former creation goes for nothing, unless we are profane enough to suppose that the work of Deity was imperfect in the first instance, and required a second creation to remedy its defects. The creation of the sun, moon, and stars will be more fully discussed when we go into the geological and astronomical theories of the origin of things. "Great whales, fishes, and winged fowl," constitute the fifth day's creation; and on the sixth day, after bringing forth "cattle and creeping things of the earth," the sacred text goes on to describe the climax of the six day's work, viz. the creation of man, in the following words:—

"And God said, let us make man in *our own image, after our likeness*, and let them dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing upon the face of the earth. So God created man *in his own image, in the image of God created he him, male and female created he them.*" With this workmanship ends the six days' creation, and the first chapter of Genesis. It is clear, from this description of the creation of the first man, the writer entertained the notion that God was an organised personal being like man, who made the latter in the same shape or image as himself. And if this be the correct interpretation, and we cannot see how any other can be given, it reduces the God of the Bible to the same dimensions as the Jupiter or Saturn of the ancients, and establishes the absurdity of Anthroposmorphism—a God in human shape. This, however, can be easily shown to have been always the opinion of the Jews.

The commencement of the second chapter declares that "the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the hosts of them," and represents God resting "on the seventh day from all his works." And immediately after, at the fourth verse, we have an entirely new version of the creation, differing most

materially from the first, commencing thus:—"These are the generations of the heavens and of the earth, when they were created, in the day that the Lord God made the earth and the heavens, and every plant of the field, before it was in the earth, and every herb of the field, before it grew, for the Lord had not caused it to rain upon the earth, *and there was not a man to till the ground.* So it appears that though "male and female created he them," there was not a man to till the ground. The first chapter is very particular in giving an account of the creation of man "in the image of God," as the termination of the six days' work, but here, after all is supposed to be finished, "there is not a man to till the ground." Reconcile these confuting statements if you can, ye most grave and learned defenders of orthodoxy. But the discrepancy does not end here; we are told "The Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul." That a garden was planted for him, into which he was put, "to dress it and to keep it," with the injunction that "of every tree of the garden he might freely eat, but of the tree of knowledge of good and evil" he should not eat, or if he did, he should surely die. In reading the 29th verse of the first chapter, we find that, instead of a garden, he had the whole earth given him, with all the fruits. The second chapter goes on to say, "*he was alone,*" he had no "help meet for him," though it will be observed, from the account given in the first chapter, that the creation of both male and female took place at the same time, and on the sixth day, for it says "male and female created he them;" while in the second account, Adam, the first man, must have been alone for some time, until the Lord took pity on his forlorn condition, and made him a wife, or "help meet for him." The process of making this help is rather novel, for it is said "The Lord caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept; and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof; and the rib which the Lord God had taken from man made he a woman, and brought her into the man."¹ One is at a loss to discover the utility of depriving Adam of one of his ribs for the purpose of forming a woman, or how to conceive the possibility of such a small article becoming a full grown female; especially when we consider it would have been more workmanlike to have manufactured the woman out of the original material of which Adam was made, instead of putting the latter to the inconvenience of losing one of his ribs.

But as Burn says truly,

"The best laid schemes of mice and men
Gang aft a'glee,"

and so found out, ere long, Adam and his

unfortunate spouse. But a short time were they allowed to revel in the sweets of paradise—to lead a life of shameless nakedness and mindless vacuity, and to pluck the golden fruits of the evergreen and overhanging trees. There was a worm in the bud, a canker in the heart's core. By the wiles of a serpent were the intentions of Deity frustrated, and the curses of sin, misery, and death introduced into the world. So says the "inspired" historian in the following words:—"Now the serpent was more subtle than any beast of the field, which the Lord God had made. And he said unto the woman, yea, hath God said, ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden. And the woman said unto the serpent, we may eat of the fruits of the trees of the garden; but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die. And the serpent said unto the woman, ye shall not surely die, for God doth know, that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good from evil." Now, a serpent who could carry on such a sensible conversation, must indeed have been both subtle and clever, far above any of the beasts or serpents of which we have any knowledge at the present day. The serpent also possessed the valuable quality of speaking the truth, which the Deity did not, respecting the consequences of eating of the forbidden fruit. Adam, indeed, must have been a very simple-minded man before the transgression, not to know of his being naked. His state of mind, if we are to credit the narrative, could be only of the most idiotic character, until the serpent put him in the way of enlightening his understanding, by the eating of the apple, or whatever else it might be. Adam and his spouse are soon found out by the Lord, and in cross questioning them, the man blames the woman, and the woman criminales the serpent. The Lord being satisfied they were all three in the scrape, passes judgment, in regular order, on all the delinquents, beginning with the principal transgressor, the serpent, in the following terms:—"And the Lord God said unto the serpent—because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field, upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life." By what means, the serpent performed locomotion before the infliction of this curse, whether upon his head, or the point of his tail, the text saith not. The woman next receives chastisement. "I will," says Deity, "greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow shalt thou bring forth children, and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee. And unto Adam he

said—"because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree of which I commanded thee, saying, thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life: thorns, also, and thistles, shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field. In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return into the ground; for out of it was thou taken: for dust thou art, and into dust shalt thou return." They are consequently both driven forth, and a patrol put upon the tree of life in the shape of a cherubim, and a flaming sword, for fear, it is said, "they would also take of the tree of life, and live for ever." And so ends the account of the creation of the world and the fall of man.

How man was organised before the fall, we have no account, or if as now, how reconcilable with the laws of all organised existences. Decay and decomposition is the law of organised bodies, to which there is no exception. In the beautiful language of the poet—

"Nought may endure but mutability."

If Adam possessed nerves, muscles, tendons, and bones,—the aggregate organs and properties which make a living sentient being, he could not be exempt before the fall, from those casualties to which all such bodies are subject. Had he been immersed in water, respiration must have been stopped, and consequently death ensued. Had he stumbled, he must have been liable to sprain or break his legs, and necessarily have felt pain; or had he fallen by accident over a precipice, he must have run the risk of breaking his neck. The text says he was made of flesh before the fall, for that a rib was taken out of his side to make a woman, and the "flesh closed up instead thereof;" if so, he must have been liable to all the contingences enumerated, therefore death was implied in his very existence, and could not have been brought about by the eating of the fruit or any other similar means. Either all modes of being were unsusceptible of change before the fall; or in other words the existing nature of all bodies had no existence before the time of Adam eating the apple, or else the whole story must be untrue. To suppose the former requires far more faith, then we could ever lay claim to, and is a conclusion in direct opposition to the discoveries of science as we shall afterwards endeavour to show. Certainly, a clumsier or more unphilosophical attempt to explain the creation of the world, and the origin of evil has never been made; infinitely less elegant and methodical than most of the other cosmogonies of the ancients. The whole account divested of its contra-

dictions and discrepancies may be summed up in the following terms. That God arose out of a state of eternal quietude, and created the heavens and the earth in the space of six days. The "firmament," and the earth, and the vegetable world being the first formed; afterwards, the sun, moon, and stars; and lastly, fish, fowl, beasts of the field, &c. with man; all which events are included in six days. And that evil and death were unknown until the transgression and fall of the first man and woman through the temptation of a serpent. Having given this summary of the account of creation, we proceed from the special to the general, in which we shall endeavour to prove.

1st. That creation, both as it regards time and the order in which the development of things took place, as given in the book of Genesis, is in violation of the discoveries of modern science, and admitted to be such by the most eminent men.

2d, That death should not ensue, in consequence of any transgression of Adam, for that death existed long anterior to the epoch ascribed to the origin of man.

The first proposition involves the whole geological argument, the other being dependent on the truth of the first, which we shall now proceed to establish. Let us imagine the earth to be a kernel surrounded by a shell, then the kernel will represent the nucleus, or central mass, and the shell the crust. Geologists, however, never think of the crust and nucleus as being separated by a distinct line of demarcation. The way in which the mind must distinguish them, is, conceiving of the nucleus as constituting the great central mass of the earth, as a homogeneous mass of matter not liable to change, and of the crust as a comparatively thin rind; as a combination of heterogeneous materials, which perpetually undergo revolution. The crust of the earth is its outer portion, consisting of a variety of materials, which taken collectively are called rocks, whether loose bodies as sand, gravel, or clay, or indurated beds of stone; they all

are known by the same generic term. In digging through the vegetable soil, we usually come to clay, sand, or gravel, or a mixture of these unconsolidated materials. In most places after getting through the clay or gravel, we come upon stone lying in layers or beds, parallel to each other, either of one kind, or of different kinds, according to the depth, and which vary in different countries and in different parts of the same county, both in their constitutional parts, and in the thickness and position of their orders and layers. The elements of which these strata are composed, are for the most part quartz, of which, gun-flints will furnish an example, and the well known substances clay and limestone, mixed in so many forms and proportions, as to produce a considerable variety of rocks. Besides this elementary character or simple structure: the greater portion of these rocks contain foreign bodies, such as fragments of rock, shells, bones of land animals, reptiles, fishes, &c., and portions of trees and plants. The order in which layers or strata lie upon each other, is of a determinate character and is never inverted. The one is placed upon the other in a regular order, and though many of the intermediate strata may often be found wanting, the relationship never alters in the least degree. It is from observing this determinate order of stratification that geologists calculate the ages of rocks and the order of deposition. There is no instance in which all the strata, classified by geologists, have been found in one place. It seldom happens that more than three or four of the series are seen together, but the order of succession has been established by the combination of observations made in different countries at distant points. The arrangements of the strata, and the order in which they are super-imposed, will be made more clear by the following method which represent the gradation of rocks from the granite or primary rock upwards. On the one side, are the names and nature of the rocks, on the other side, the localities where found,

TABULAR REPRESENTATION OF STRATIFIED AND UNSTRATIFIED ROCKS.

	Modern Epoch.	Alluvia.	NATURE OF THE DIFFERENT ROCKS.		INSTANCES WHERE THEY ARE FOUND.	
			<i>Vegetable Soil.</i>		Mouth of Thames and other rivers, eastern and south eastern coast of England.	
Tertiary Strata.	Newer Pliocene.	Older Pliocene.	Sand, clay, gravel, bones of existing and extinct animals.		Parts of Sicily, Italy and the Morea, and various parts of North America.	
			Sand, clay, pebbles, beds of hard white sandstone, many shells belonging to existing species, bones of extinct animals.		Hampstead Heath, coast of Suffolk and Norfolk, Tuscany.	
			The same as the above, with a less proportion of existing species of shells, and more of extinct species.		Auvergne in France, Valley of the Arno, Italy, South France, Poland, Hungary.	
Tertiary Strata.	Miocene.		Alternations of limestone, clay, and with about one-half shells of existing species, and one-half of extinct species, bones of extinct animals.			

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NATURE OF THE DIFFERENT ROCKS.

INSTANCES WHERE THEY ARE FOUND.

Thick beds of clay, with many sea shells, remains of extinct trees and plants, land and amphibious animals, with only $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. shell of existing species.

London and Paris beds, Isle of Sheppy, Isle of Wight.

Chalk, flints, marl, greensand, beds of Dover Cliffs, Flamborough Head Yorkshire, South coast of Kent, Sussex.

Limestone, coals, beds of clay, marl, sand, organic remains of reptiles, shells. Portland and Bath stone; extend from the mouth of the river Tees to the South coast of Bristol channel.

Argillaceous limestone, marl, clay, thin beds of limestone, reptiles, shells. Whitby, Gloucester Lyme Regis, Lincolnshire.

Red marly sandstone, beds of alabaster, rock salt, magnesia, limestone, reptiles, shells, plants. Great part of East Yorkshire, Lancashire, Staffordshire, Nottingham, Worcester, Chester, Sunderland, Ferry-bridge.

Various seams of coal, beds of ironstone, clay, and sandstone, and freestone of various qualities, great abundance of vegetable remains. Newcastle-upon-Tyne, parts of Yorkshire, and Lancashire, Staffordshire, South Wales, and the vale in which Glasgow and Edinburgh are situated.

Clay and sandstone in alternations, dark-red sandstone, beds of pebbles. Derbysire, Cumberland, Herefordshire, Mendip Hills, Somersetshire.

Limestone, conglomerates, argillaceous sandstone, shells, fuci, trilobites. Great part of the South of Scotland, South Devon, Cornwall, Westmoreland, Wales.

Slates and hard rocks in alternatory beds. Great part of the Highlands of Scotland

Granite and volcanic rocks, porphyry, Part of the Mountains of the Highlands of Scotland, Cornwall, and the principal mountain ranges of the world.

The division into tertiary, secondary, transition, and primary rocks, though still retained for the sake of division, is abandoned for all practical purposes, the views which gave rise to these terms being no longer tenable. Geologists have fixed the order of the superposition of the strata comprising the earth's surface, partly by the mineral composition of each member of the series, partly by their containing fragments of rock, but chiefly from the remains of animals and plants imbedded in them. About 35 years ago, Mr. William Smith, of Churchill, in Oxfordshire, by an extensive series of observations in different parts of England, ascertained that particular strata were characterised by the presence of certain fossil shells, which were either confined exclusively to them, or in predominating quality, or were of rare occurrence in other strata; and he was thus enabled to identify two rocks at distant points as belonging to one stratum, when mere mineral characters would either have left him in uncertainty, or have entirely failed in deciding the question. When this discovery became known to geologists, numerous observations were made in other countries, which completely proved that the

principle holds good generally, and throughout the whole series of strata, from the lowest in which organic remains are found, to those nearest the surface. An examination of the phenomena exhibited by the internal structure of this series of superimposed rocks has established this further principle—that all the strata must have been deposited, on pre-existing ground that was either horizontal, or nearly so, at the bottom of a fluid, holding their materials either in suspension or in solution, or partly both. Geologists have therefore come to the conclusion that the chief part of all the strata, however elevated they may now be above the level of the sea, were gradually deposited at the bottom of the ocean, and the remainder of them at the bottom of inland seas and lakes, from which positions they have been at different times, and by a succession of changes, elevated to their present positions. The mode in which these changes have been effected, will be discussed when we come to the consideration of the Deluge in our next number. From the granite upwards, we find that with the different strata appear different groups of organised beings following each other in succession. In the

lower series we have shells, fish, and vegetable remains. As we approach nearer the surface, we witness a gradual change in this respect. The groups of the secondary formation teem with the skeletons of monstrous reptiles, principally of an aqueous and amphibious character. The *Ichthyosaurus* and *Plesiosaurus*, two gigantic sea reptiles, unlike all existing species; the monstrous *Iguanodon*, the remains of which have been found sixty or seventy feet long; the *Megalosaurus*, the *Hylosaurus*, *Pterodactyle*, or flying lizard, with numerous other monsters belonging to the saurian or lizard tribe; fishes and shells are abundant also. We have throughout the whole series but two species of quadrupeds, marsupial animals belonging to the opossum kind; and but one specimen of a bird, a species of wader. The immense number of reptiles indicates a high state of temperature during the whole period the secondary deposits were taking place. The character of the tertiary formation indicates a reduction of the earth's temperature, and the existence of other species of organised beings. The gigantic reptiles of the secondary epochs had ceased to exist—dry land arose over the depths of the ancient oceans; amphibious and land quadrupeds existed in abundance, and new species of shell fish, and other organic tribes occupied the seas and lakes, though mostly of extinct species. Then the *Palæotherium*, the *Dinotherium*, the *Mastodon*, and the *Mammoth* were the lords of creation. Other changes swept over the earth; these also ceased to exist, and a new state of things came into being, with the existing types or species of organisation. It is, however, the opinion of the most eminent geologists of the day, that the changes of temperature and alterations on the surface of the earth, with the progressive destruction and reproduction of species have all been brought about by similar causes to those now in operation, an account of which shall be given in our next article.

The extinction of species is an important fact in all that relates to the geological history of the earth. Every particular kind of genus of animal usually consists of several individuals, which, while they possess a common character, or class of character, have particular forms which distinguish them from each other, and such individuals constitute the species of a genus. The circumstances by which geologists distinguish the relative ages of strata, in so far as animal remains are concerned, depend, not upon the genus, but the species: for while the species have become extinct one after another successively, the genera to which they belong have continued to exist from the period of the deposition of the oldest of the secondary strata to the present time. For example, the

genus *ostrea*, or oyster, is found in the limestones which lie beneath the coal formation, but not one of the many species of oysters which are met with in almost all the strata from that limestone up to the chalk is identical with any species inhabiting our present seas. Some of the marine reptiles are extraordinary, both in point of form and size. Of these monsters of the ancient seas some different genera have already been found entombed in the secondary strata, and of some of the genera there are several species. They have been called saurians, from their resemblance to the lizard tribe, *saura* being the Greek name for a lizard. Mr. Lyell, in opposition to the older geologists, who teach the progressive development of life from simple types of organisation, co-existent with the older strata, to complete development at a later period of the newest formations,—contends that the fossils of the oldest rocks present as complex and complete an organised structure as any of the latest period, and that therefore the doctrine of a gradual development of species, from the simple to the complex, must be false. He says, (*Principles of Geology*, vol. 1.)—"numerous scales of fish have been found by Dr. Fleming in quarries of the old red sandstone, at Clashbinny, in Perthshire, where I have myself collected them; and I have two entire skeletons of fish from the same formation in Forfarshire." These beds are decidedly older than the coal and mountain limestones of Fifeshire, which entirely destroys the theory of the precedence of the simplest forms of animals. Scales also of a tortoise, nearly allied to *trionyx*, occur abundantly in the bituminary schists of Caithness, and in the same formation in the Orkneys of Scotland. Professor Sedgwick and Mr. Murchison confidently pronounce these schists to be of the age of the old red sandstone, so that we have here an example of a fossil reptile in rocks referred to the oldest part of the carboniferous series. The only negative fact, therefore, remaining in support of the imperfect development of the higher order of animals in remote ages, is the absence of birds and mammalia. The former are generally wanting in deposits of all ages, even where the highest order of animals occur. Land mammifera could not, as was before suggested, be looked for in strata formed in an ocean interspersed with isles, such as we may suppose to have existed in the Northern Hemisphere, when the carboniferous rocks were formed.

As all are agreed that the ancient strata in question were subaqueous, and for the most part submarine, from what data, we may ask, do naturalists infer the non-existence, or even the rarity, of warm-blooded quadrupeds in the earlier ages? Have they dredged the bottom of the existing ocean

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throughout an area co-extensive with that occupied by the carboniferous rocks * * * The casualties must be rare indeed whereby land quadrupeds are swept by rivers and torrents into the open sea; and still rarer the contingency of such a floating body not being devoured by sharks or other predacious fish, such as were those of which we find the teeth preserved in some of the carboniferous strata. But if the carcasses should escape, and should happen to sink where sediment was in the act of accumulating, and if the numerous causes of subsequent disintegration should not efface all traces of the body included for countless ages in solid rock, is it not contrary to all calculation of chances, that we should hit upon the exact spot—that mere point in the bed of an ancient ocean, where the precious relic was entombed? Can we expect, for a moment, when we have only succeeded, amid several thousand fragments of corals and shells, in finding a few bones of *aquatic and amphibious animals*, that we should meet with a single skeleton of an inhabitant of the land? * * *

The latest discoveries of geology hear out Mr. Lyell in his position, for evidence of organic life is manifest in the igneous rocks. Professor Ehrenberg, by means of the microscope, has detected the minute skeletons of animalculæ in the igneous rocks, of which granite is the principal; and as these skeletons are of a siliceous material, and therefore capable of resisting the action of powerful heat, it is supposed, (and with good reason, inasmuch as these rocks have every appearance of being sedimentary or stratified rocks, altered to their present state by great internal heat,) that the heat under which this change of structure took place might be sufficient to destroy all evidences of organic life, with the exception of these minute infusoria. This theory is supported by Lyell, Dr. Mantell, and the most eminent of our living geologists; hence granite and other unstratified rocks have been called metamorphic rocks, signifying changed by heat from a stratified to an unstratified structure. By this theory we carry back the existence of life before the formation of the granites, which were once thought the foundations of the world, an extent of time of which imagination can scarcely conceive the limits.

As far as the discovery of fossil remains enable us to form a judgment, man is of a later date than many other kind of animals; the remains of man being found no lower than the alluvial deposits. As yet, however, the inquiry is in its infancy, and we know not what modification subsequent discoveries may make in this question, especially, since Mr. Lyell published the first edition of the "Principles of Geology," in which he stated no *Quadrupeds* (monkeys) had been found

in the tertiary formation; discoveries of such have taken place in the tertiary beds of France. Sufficient has been shown to prove not only the immense antiquity of our earth, but also of organic life. And if man is among the last of created beings, as geologists affirm, how immense must be the time between the period of the existence of the primary infusoria, or of the animals of the early strata and that of man; and yet the Bible would make us believe that all these wondrous changes which geology exhibits; this mutation of animal and vegetable life, up to the present epoch, were the work of six days; and not only these, but also the creation of the sun, moon, and stars. Millions of years are inadequate to grasp the series of formation, for when we take into consideration that the sea shoals but an inch in a century, we may form an idea of the immense time necessary to deposit the various strata; and yet the Bible chronologists, would fix it all as the work of six days, performed by the God of the Jews, only six thousand years ago. The intelligent among the Christian world, however, have become ashamed of the story and deny its literal interpretation; Dr. Buckland has abandoned it in his *Bridge-water Treatise*; so has Dr. Pye Smith, Lyell, Mantell, and all who lay claim to eminence in science. Six days is now said, not to mean six days, but long periods of time, no one can tell how long; and the beginning is not meant to refer to six thousand years ago, but to some epoch long before, of which nothing whatever is known. If this interpretation be true the fourth commandment must be a blunder, and the six working days with the seventh as a day of rest, can have no relation whatever to this new-fangled whim of the creation, which we are sure never entered into the craniums of the ancient Jews. Thus is error ever inconsistent with itself. The fossil remains belonging to each strata, support the doctrine of a regular extinction of old species, and creation of new, a process of change which Mr. Lyell contends is not peculiar to the epoch, when these strata were depositing, but is in existence at the present time. That there is a power or energy in nature, by which new species are brought into being, appears clear, but the nature of that power is as yet unknown to man.* What, then,

* It may be safe to assume, that exclusive of microscopic beings, there are between one and two millions of species now inhabiting the *terrestrial globe*; so that if only one of those were to become extinct annually, and one new one were to be called into being, much more than a million of years might be required to bring about a complete revolution in organic life.

I am not hazarding at present any hypo-

becomes of the Biblical account of making all species in two days ?

But the erroneous characteristics of the account of creation are not exhausted. It is said, that sun, moon, and stars were made after the earth on the fourth day. Modern astronomy tells a different tale. The heavens are full of cloud-like bodies called nebulae—some thin and transparent, others more opaque, and some appear like stars, being only slightly surrounded with nebulous matter. These bodies present every variety of appearance, from that which is called star dust, to condensed bodies almost resembling stars. The theory which La Place started, and since adopted by Herschel, Arago, and other eminent astronomers of the present day, is, that there are bodies of nebulae in the progress of condensation, which, in the process of time, become stars, and from which suns and systems are formed; and also, that while new systems are forming, others are decaying. All the physical laws of our solar system are in harmony with this hypothesis. It is the only one that can explain the origin of the rota-

thesis as to the probable rate of change, but none, will deny that when the *annual birth* and the *annual death* of one species on the globe is proposed as a mere speculation, this at least is to imagine no slight degree of instability in the animate creation. If we divide the surface of the earth into twenty regions of equal area, one of those might comprehend a space of land and water equal in dimensions to Europe, and might contain a twentieth part of the millions of species which may be assumed to exist in the animal kingdom. In this region, one species only would, according to the rate of mortality before assumed, perish in twenty years, or only five out of fifty thousand in a century. But as a considerable proportion would belong to the aquatic class, with which we have a very imperfect acquaintance, we must exclude them from our consideration, and if they constitute half of the entire number, then one species only might be lost in forty years among the terrestrial tribes. Now, the mammalia, whether terrestrial or aquatic, bear so small a proportion to other classes of animals, forming less perhaps than one thousandth part of the whole, that if the longevity of species in the different orders were equal, a vast period must elapse before it would come to the turn of this conspicuous class to lose one of its number. If one species only of the whole animal kingdom died out in forty years, no more than one mammifer might disappear in 40,000 years in a region of the dimensions of Europe.—*Lyell's Principles of Geology*, vol. iii. 1840. The dodo is an instance of the extinction of species in the history of man.

tory motion of the sun, and the rest of the planetary system. There is not a fact respecting the motions, both rotatory and orbicular, of the planetary bodies, but what it not only harmonises with, but also goes far to explain the probable origin. According to this hypothesis, the sun is the remains of one of these nebulous masses. The planets, it is supposed, were thrown out, at different times, from the substance of the sun, beginning with Uranus, and ending with Mercury. This order of formation is justified by the present appearances which the planets present when observed by the telescope. This hypothesis, so consistent with all astronomical data, is fatal to the notion that the sun and stars were created after the earth; for, if it be true, the earth is much younger than any of the planets, and infinitely more so than the sun. Millions upon millions of years, does this glance of the subject plunge us back into bygone epochs, revealing in the starry heavens, as well as in the earth below, evidences of continuous change—of the birth and death of worlds, and systems of worlds, as well as of animal and vegetable life.

If, therefore, there is any truth whatever in the facts and reasonings of modern science, we have established our position, viz., that the world was not created in six days, and that the order in which the creation is said to have taken place is untrue; and, in doing so, we have called in the first names of the age to support us in the argument. Death, we have also shown, could be no result of Adam's transgression; the entombed skeletons which teem in myriads among the ruins of former epochs, from the alluvial down to the granite rock, proclaim aloud the absurdity of such a notion. Independent, therefore, of the inherent discrepancies which we pointed out in the mode of telling the Bible story, we have met it with scientific arguments of such a nature as to render the retention of the literal meaning impossible, and must, at least, reduce the whole affair to an allegory, which may have no more to do with the creation and the fall of man than the adventures of Robinson Crusoe or Baron Munchausen. The formation of mountain chains, and the other changes which have taken place in the crust of the earth; the alternations of sea and land; and the formation of strata with the embedding of fossil remains, will be fully discussed in our inquiry into the truth of Noah's flood, called by theologians the "Universal Deluge."

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MOSAIC ACCOUNT OF THE DELUGE.

THE doctrine, or belief in a Universal Deluge, has been, from the earliest times, a fundamental feature of the Jewish and Christian systems, and like the creation and the fall of man, has been held by those creeds to be a signal instance of the manifestation of the power and will of God, and the foundation of many important subsequent events. The deluge, as narrated in the sixth chapter of Genesis, flows directly out of the circumstances attendant on the fall of man, and must, to some extent, be viewed in connection with those antecedent events. Sorrow, toil, and death are pronounced by the Lord to be the consequences of eating the forbidden fruit—consequences which, according to the text, are soon manifested in abundance. Cain is represented as murdering his brother, Abel, in a fit of passion, because the bloody sacrifice of the latter was more acceptable to Deity, than the vegetable offering of the former. Population increases fast, and no wonder, when we take into account the prodigious age of the Antediluvians, and the additional intercourse of the "sons of God," with the daughters of men, for the purpose of increasing population. And with the progress of the race, there is a gigantic increase of crime, for it is said in Genesis, chapter vi, verse 1, and succeeding verses—"And it came to pass, when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born to them, *that the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair, and they took them wives of all which they chose.* And the Lord said, *my spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh; yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years.* There were giants in the earth in those days; and also, after that, when the sons of God came in to the daughters of men, and they bore children to them—the same became mighty men, which were of old, men of renown. (These must have been curiosities—half angel, half man—a specimen at the present day would, as an exhibition, make the fortune of a naturalist.) And God saw that the wickedness was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. *And it repented the Lord that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart.* And the Lord said, I will destroy man, whom I have created, from the face of the earth—both man

and beast, and the creeping thing, and the fowl^s of the air, *for it repenteth me that I have made them.* But Noah found grace in the sight of the Lord."

It appears, notwithstanding the intermarriages of the angels or sons of God with the daughters of men, that no improvement took place in the species, as might have been expected, but instead "every imagination of the thought of the heart was evil continually," so that at last it is said the Lord, in a passion, "repented that he made man," and not only man, but every other created thing. The Being of whom it is said in another portion of the Bible, that he is not a man that he should repent, is here represented like some bungling workman lamenting over a bad job—vexed with himself that he should have been so incompetent to the undertaking. How an omniscient and omnipotent Being should have thus been foiled by a serpent, and be made to confess not only his incapacity, but his weakness, is a riddle much beyond our comprehension. If the attributes assigned by theologians to God have any existence at all, the representation of the Lord given in the previous quotations must be a caricature. For an omniscient being would have constructed all things for the best, to meet all present and future contingencies—an omnipotent being would have been powerful enough to prevent any departure from the intention of omniscience, and an unchangeable being, consequently, would never, in the language of erring and short-sighted man, have repented of anything he had done; for repentance is characteristic of weakness and error, and can never be predicated of omniscience and omnipotence. Noah's God is only a localised changeable personage, and a proof of the very gross and foolish notions entertained by the Jews on the subject of Deity.

As the earth was so "corrupt" and "full of violence," and as all beasts, and creeping things, and fowls, whether mice or elephants, fleas or scorpions, cock robins or eagles, had gone astray, and become great sinners, one would have thought the easiest way of setting all right, would have been either to change their natures to that state of innocence and simplicity, we are led to suppose, they presented before the fall, or else to have annihilated the whole, and made an entirely new race. Neither plans, however, were adopted;

for instead of vigorously going to work, to put things into proper order, the Lord having decided upon drowning the world, resolves to preserve a male and female of every species, to perpetuate the breed. This does not appear to us a very satisfactory mode of removing the "corruptions of all flesh," thus merely to drown the earth in a freak of vengeance, and at the same time, to perpetuate the tainted species, which had been at the bottom of all mischief. To enable the favoured animals to weather the storm, Noah who, with his family, is included in the saving clause, is ordered to make a large boat; and that there may be no mistake about its construction, the Lord is represented like an architect giving him all the necessary instructions, in chapter vi. verse 14, 15, 16:—

Noah being informed how to build his three storey floating castle, is next instructed as follows:—Verses 19, 20, "And of every living thing of all flesh, two of every sort shall thou bring into the ark, to keep them alive with thee; they shall be male and female. Of fowl after their kind, and of cattle after his kind—of every creeping thing of the earth, after their kind—two of every sort shalt come unto thee, to keep them alive. And *take them unto thee of all food that is eaten*, and thou shalt gather it too, and it shall be for food to thee and to them."

The Lord continues his instructions in the succeeding chapter, in which Noah is commanded "of every clean beast to take by sevens, the male and his female; and of beasts that are not clean by two, the male and the female. And Noah did according unto all that the Lord commanded him."

Everything being completed, and the large boat built, it is further said, verse 7,—“And Noah went in, and his sons and his wife, and his son's wives with him, into the ark, because of the waters of the flood; of *clean beasts*, and of beasts that are not clean, and of fowls, and of every thing that creepeth upon the earth. There went in *two and two* unto Noah into the ark."

The whole cargo being stowed away, the Lord is represented shutting up the ark, or in nautical language, closing up the hatchway. The "fountains of the great deep are then broken up, and the windows of heaven are opened," and it rains upon the earth forty days and forty nights—the waters covering the highest mountains, after which a wind passes over the earth—the fountains of the deep and the windows of heaven are stopped, and at the end of an hundred and fifty days, the waters are abated.

We shall now halt a little to point out the discrepancies and absurdities in this account, when we shall pass on to a consideration of the evidence of any such deluge ever having taken place: first, then, respecting the dimensions of the ark, which saves Noah's family and the livestock. It is affirmed, that a male and female of all created things were taken into the ark, "beasts,

fowls, and creeping things," no exception from the insect up to the elephant. Now, can any reasonable person believe, that such a floating castle could accommodate the males and females of all species of birds, beasts, and insects, besides stowing away as much provender as would last them for a hundred and fifty days. When it is taken into consideration that some millions of species of birds, beasts and insects, are known and classified by naturalists, and that vast numbers are as yet unknown; the notion of their being all compressed into a boat of such limited dimensions as Noah's ark is preposterous. The consumption of provisions by the animals during the hundred and fifty days, must have been enormous, and the hay, straw, corn, and flesh meat, necessary to supply such an immense menagerie, must have occupied more space than a dozen such arks could afford.

Another great difficulty connected with this story, is, the collection of the animals together from the distant parts of the earth. Genera, as well as species of animals, as well as vegetables, are circumscribed by geographical limits; the various geographical divisions of the globe having animals peculiar to each. For instance, the Australian continent is occupied by above forty species of the marsupial family, or those furnished with a pouch under the belly, for the young, such as the kangaroo, of which kind of animals, scarcely any occur elsewhere, except a few species in some of the Islands of the Indian Archipelago, and the opossums of America. Sumatra has a peculiar species of tapir, and a kind of rhinoceros not found elsewhere. The Falkland Isles have a peculiar kind of fox. South Africa has a variety of species, not found in any other place. America, when discovered, had a race of animals, altogether different from the old world—the llama, jaguar, paca, coati, and sloth; while the camel-horse, buffalo, lion and tiger, were unknown in these newly discovered regions. And so throughout the whole animal world, there is a geographical distinction of all species, no one species being common to all, but each district having its peculiar quadrupeds—birds and insects. By what possibility, then, could Noah collect his animals together, from all quarters of the globe, and by what means could they cross seas and mountains, and other great natural barriers, travelling thousands of miles to be safely lodged in Noah's wooden box. When divines answer these questions with any show of reason, it will be time enough to take up space, and use further argument in the discussion of it; as it is, the idea of the animals of the earth—beasts, birds, and creeping things, lion, elephant, kangaroo, eagle, parrot, sparrow, louse, bug, and flea, with all the other tribes of living things, leaving their respective localities, to form part of this great floating menagerie, is so truly ridiculous, as to be unworthy of serious refutation.

The same crude and ignorant notions respecting the heavens which we pointed out as charac-

teristic of the account of the creation and the fall of man, are also observable in this account of the deluge. It is said that the "fountains of the deep were broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened," and when the Lord had done mischief enough, the "fountains also of the deep and the windows of heaven were stopped." Such a narrative could only proceed from those who viewed the sky as a glass roof, or ceiling, with sky lights, or sluices in it, to let the rain through when necessary, and who imagined the centre of the earth to be full of water, kept under by flood gates, which could be drawn at any time when an extra amount of water was required. And as on this occasion of drowning the world, a very great supply was necessary; the heavenly windows or sluices were opened, and the earthly flood-gates drawn, for fifty days and nights. In the description of the animals which Noah was instructed to take into the ark, and which he did take, there is a great discrepancy—in Chap vii., v. 2, Noah is ordered by the Lord to take into the ark, clean beasts by seven, the male and the female, and of unclean ones only two, the male and the female: but in verse 19, it is stated, in express violation of this order, that only two of each sort went in, the male and the female, both clean and unclean. Farther, we are informed in Chap viii. v. 20—that after Noah came out of the ark, he made a burnt offering of every clean beast and of every clean fowl; If only two, the male and female of each species, went into the ark, we cannot see how the breed could be perpetuated, or what use there was in confining them so long in the ark, only to kill them for a sweet smelling savour to the Lord, as soon as they came out. The most ridiculous part of the whole affair is the Lord smelling the "sweet savour" from the burning of the animals, like a hungry man when he goes past the door of a cook-shop, and inhales the flavour of roast beef. What contemptible notions the Jews must have entertained of their Divinity, to think of him putting his nose out of a cloud, and snuffing in the fumes of burning animals. Another thing appears strange in this account—how Noah should make the distinction between clean and unclean animals!—a classification first made by Moses. Does not this show that the account of the deluge is a patched up story of the Jews, after the time of Moses—wishing to apply their religious law to times said to be long anterior to their existence as a nation, and with which it could have no connection. The account finishes with the Lord pledging himself not to flood the earth any more; and as a proof of his sincerity, he "sets his bow in the clouds." It would seem there was no rainbow before this time. If so, rain could not have fallen to the earth, or else the rays of the sun did not possess the quality of being refracted by the globules of rain into the prismatic colours. Accordingly, the different colours which arise out of

the refractive property of light, had no existence till this time. Had the writer or compiler of Genesis possessed but the smallest smattering of science, he would have saved himself many an inconsistency and absurdity.

The whole account of the deluge (taking it in the literal sense, and as that is the sense in which Jews and Christians view it, we are bound to follow them in that particular) may be summed up in a very few words, thus:—

About four thousand years ago, the whole earth was drowned by the Deity, both man and the inferior animals, with the exception of one favoured family, and the male and female of every species of "beast, bird, and creeping thing."

Leaving out of view the errors and discrepancies with which the narrative abounds that pretends to record this wonderful event, let us ask the question—Is there sufficient evidence to warrant a belief in any such a deluge? We answer fearlessly no! and shall proceed to make good, by argument, our negation.

As the settlement of this question involves the whole geological argument respecting the formation of stratified and igneous rocks, and the abrasion, subsidence, and elevation of the earth's surface, we shall be under the necessity of bringing together the most remarkable facts and latest discoveries of this most important and interesting science.

The evidences of former convulsions are so obvious and striking on every part of the earth's surface, and the remains of marine animals embedded in the strata so abundant, that they must, in early times, have forced themselves on the minds of every people who were at all observant.

All these appearances once recognised, it seems natural that the mind should decide in favour, not only of mighty changes in past ages, but of alternate periods of repose and disorder.

According to Herodotus, the Egyptians were aware that the soil beneath the plains of the Nile, as well as the hills bounding the great valley, contained marine shells; and no doubt similar observations were made by most of the eastern philosophers; and as these appearances would lead to the conclusion that water had flowed over all such parts where the fossil remains of marine animals were found, the idea of deluges submerging the earth would very soon suggest itself. It is stated in the *Timæus* of Plato, that the Egyptians believed the world to be subject occasionally to conflagrations and deluges, whereby *the Gods checked the career of wickedness, and purified the earth from guilt*. After each regeneration, mankind were made virtuous and happy, from which condition they gradually receded again into vice and immorality. The Greeks borrowed almost all their tenets of the former successive destruction and renovation of the world from the Egyptians; * and the Orphic Hymns contained descriptions of

* Pritchard's Egypt. Mythol. p. 177,

these successive changes. Thus, as most of the eastern nations had traditions of igneous and aqueous revolutions which the world had undergone—traditions supported by the appearance of fossil remains in the earth's crust when excavated; and as the Jews borrowed the most of their notions of the origin of things from the Chaldeans and Egyptians, we have a clue to the source from whence Noah's flood was derived. It is undoubtedly a modification of the prevailing traditions of the surrounding nations. And these traditions, no doubt, were founded on earthquakes and volcanic eruptions, and on partial inundations, which, from the limited geographical and philosophical knowledge of ignorant tribes, would be easily elevated into universal conflagrations and deluges. Besides the frequent migrations of the earlier inhabitants of the globe, and the total want of written annals, would add greatly to the colouring of these traditions in the progress of ages. The floods of Ogyges and Deucalion are said to have happened before the Trojan war. The Ogygian flood is stated to have laid Attica waste, and by some writers is referred to as a great overflowing of rivers. Many similar floods must have happened in various countries in these early times, which, as all strange phenomena was supposed to be the immediate work of the gods, would easily lay the foundation of such superstitions as prevailed in Egypt and Judea. Having given the probable origin of Noah's deluge, we shall now proceed to inquire into the truth of the universal and extraordinary character given to it in the book of Genesis; and to show that existing geological causes are sufficient to give a satisfactory explanation of the origin of all the deluvial traditions of early times. As already explained in our first treatise on the creation, the crust of the earth in many places, upon excavation, appears to be made up of various strata or layers of rock, in which are found embedded the organic remains of animals, both of extinct and existing species. On the tops of the highest mountains evidences of sedimentary deposition are seen, and marine fossils often found. When these appearances began to excite considerable attention and discussion some few hundred years ago; they were, by theologians, considered triumphant proofs of the waters having covered the highest mountains, and deposited the shells there during Noah's deluge; while those who entertained opposite views were completely at a loss to explain by any other means the curious phenomena. In these times it was the fashionable opinion among geologists that all organised fossils had been buried in the solid strata during Noah's flood. Burnet, Whiston, Ilitchinson, and other scripturists held fast by the literal account of Moses, and two hundred years were spent in getting rid, to a limited extent, of that one dogma, that all fossils were the ruins of the Bible deluge. Hutton was among the first who laid the foundation of the modern school of inductive geology, and paved the way for that careful inquiry into

the history and changes of the globe since so successfully pursued by many eminent men, and which now threatens to make geology as fatal to the Mosaic hypothesis, as it was supposed to be favourable by the theorists of the times of Voltaire.

The grand argument—the only argument that has been adduced for their theory by the scriptural geologists—is the existence of marine shells on the tops of mountains and other elevated situations, and the extensive tracts of country which present appearance of having been at one time under water—proofs, say they, that the sea extended over the whole earth, and reached these elevated situations; therefore, the Bible account of the deluge must be true.

There would be some force in this argument, if those who employ it would first prove that the hills have always occupied the same elevations, and that the organic remains throughout all strata were of one general character, and belonged to existing species; for inasmuch as Noah preserved in the ark male and female of "beasts, birds, and creeping things," the breed after the flood must be the same as before, and therefore a strict identity must be proved between fossils and existing animals.

That such a position is altogether untenable, can be easily shown by an appeal to geological facts. And in doing so, it will be necessary, in the first place, to point out briefly the leading agents now at work producing change in the earth's surface, and then to exhibit illustrative facts of the effects of these agents, from which the incorrectness of the Bible theory will be easily apparent.

The great agents of change in the organic world are divided into two classes, the aqueous and the igneous. To the former belong rivers, torrents, currents and tides; to the latter volcanoes and earthquakes. Both these classes are instruments of decay as well as reproduction; but they may also be regarded as antagonistic forces, as the aqueous agents are unceasingly labouring to reduce the earth's surface to a level, while the igneous are equally active in restoring the inequalities of the external crust, by heaping up new matter in certain localities, and partly by depressing one portion by forcing out another of the earth's surface.

The aqueous agents, rivers, torrents, tides and currents, produce changes in the following manner: Rivers and torrents, by the running force which they exert, are continually wearing their banks and channels, more especially those that descend from elevated regions, and are subject to great floods. Large quantities of gravel, sand, and mud is thus continually transported towards the sea. Sometimes torrents form new channels and alter the face of a country. The power of even a small rivulet, when swollen by rain, in removing heavy bodies was lately exemplified (August 1827) in the College, a small stream which flows at a moderate declivity from the eastern water shed of the Cheviot Hills. Several thousand tons weight

of gravel and sand were transported to the plain of Till, and a bridge then in progress was carried away; some of the arch stones of which weighed from half to three quarters of a ton each, were propelled two miles down the rivulet. On the same occasion the current tore away from the abutment of a mill-dam, a large block of green stone porphyry, weighing nearly two tons, to the distance of a quarter of a mile.* Similar illustrations of the power of running water were exemplified by the storms and floods in August 1829, in the north-east of Scotland. The united line of rivers flooded on that occasion could not be less than from five to six hundred miles in length; and the whole of their course was marked by the destruction of bridges, roads, crops, and buildings. Thirty-eight bridges and a great number of farms and hamlets were utterly destroyed. On the Nairn a fragment of sandstone, fourteen feet long, three feet wide, and one foot thick, was carried above two hundred yards down the river. New ravines were formed on the sides of the mountains where no stream had previously flowed, and ancient river channels which had never been filled from time immemorial, gave passage to a copious flood.†

The rivers Erich and Isla, in the counties of Perth and Forfar, have each produced gorges in solid rock, which in many places measure from 150 to 200 feet in depth. The river Moselle has worn a channel in solid rock to the amazing depth of 600 feet. In many of the valleys of the eastern Alps, rivers have scooped out beds in conglomerate no less than 700 feet deep. These facts will be sufficient to show the powerful abrading influence of river currents; an influence so strikingly manifested in the deltas and islands forming in the mouths of the principal rivers of the globe.

Besides the interior changes, such as filling up and forming lakes, and changing the courses and channels of rivers, which are constantly going on by the abrading force already described, continual oceanic deposits are going on. Great portions of the vast mass of earthy matter held in solution are carried to the ocean before being deposited, and there form islands and deltas in the mouths of the respective rivers. The Ganges and the Burampooter descend from the highest mountains in the world into a gulph which runs 225 miles into the continent. The area of the delta of the Ganges is considerably more than double that of the Nile, and its head commences at a distance of 220 miles in a direct line from the sea. Its base is 200 miles in length, including the space occupied by the two great arms of the Ganges which bound it on either side. That part of the delta which borders on the sea is composed of a labyrinth of rivers and creeks filled with salt water, and is known by the name of the woods, or Sunder-

bund, a wilderness infested by tigers and alligators, and, according to Rennel, equal in extent to the whole principality of Wales. The whole of this delta is formed of the fine mud brought down by the river, which has not only formed this immense district, but has shoaled the ocean for an immense distance beyond.

Some idea of the enormous mass of matter brought down by the waters of the Ganges may be had by the following calculation. By repeated experiments made upon the waters of the Ganges at different seasons, it is estimated that the mass of matter carried down annually is 355,361,464 tons, or nearly the weight of sixty of the great pyramids of Egypt: or, to put it in another light, a fleet of 2,000 ships, each loaded with about 1400 tons of mud, sailing daily down the Ganges, would not be more than equal to the operations of the river. In addition to this, the Burampooter conveys annually as much solid matter to the sea.* The delta of the Mississippi is another mighty instance of the formation of land now in progress. At the mouth of that river great submarine deposits are going forward, stretching far and wide over the bottom of the sea, which has become extremely shallow, not exceeding ten fathoms. Large rails of drift trees are brought down every spring, matted together into net work, many yards in thickness, and stretching over hundreds of square leagues. These afterwards become covered with a fine mud, on which other layers of trees are deposited the year following, until numerous alternations of earthy and vegetable matter is accumulated. Land is thus continually forming. New Orleans is built on a portion of this alluvial or lately formed land. The Nile, the Yellow River in China, the Orinoco, the Amazon, and the Rio de la Plata present similar appearances to the rivers already described. All streams in a lesser or greater degree, exhibit similar phenomena to that we have explained in the Ganges and Mississippi; and if we take into consideration the aggregate of these forces—their long-continued execution,—the quantity of matter incessantly changing place, we may form some notion of the alterations that have been effected in the surface of the globe by these agencies alone. The other aqueous agents remaining to be noticed are tides and currents. Tides are ebbings and flowings of the sea, differing in degree in various places. In the Mediterranean, deep and extensive as it is, but little tidal rise or fall is manifested, varying from five feet to ten inches. In islands remote from any continent the ebb and flow of the tide is very slight, as, for example, at St. Helena it is rarely above three feet. Tides are greatest in narrow channels, estuaries, and bays, and least in the intervening parts where the land is prominent. At the entrance of the Thames and Medway the rise at spring tides is eighteen feet, while at Yarmouth

* Lyel's Prin. Geo. vol. 1. p. 334—1840.

† Sir T. D. Lauder's account of the Great Floods of Morayshire, August 1829.

* Lyel's Principles of Geology, volume 1, page 14, 1840.

and Lowestoff, where the land strikes out, the highest is eight feet. From this it increases as the land falls back, until, at Lynn and Boston it is from twenty-two to twenty-six feet. At the mouth of the Bristol channel the tides rise thirty-six feet, and at Kings Road, near Bristol, forty-two feet. At Chepstow on the Wye, a small river which opens into the estuary of the Severn, they reach from fifty feet to as high, sometimes, as seventy-two feet.

Currents are flows of the ocean for a great distance in one direction, like the waters of a river. The most extensive system is that which has its source in the Indian Ocean, under the influence of the tradewinds, and which, after doubling the Cape of Good Hope, inclines northward along the western coast of Africa, then crosses the Atlantic near the Equator, and is lost in the Carribean Sea, yet seems to be again revived in the current which issues from the Gulph of Mexico, by the Straits of Bahama, and flows rapidly in a north-easterly direction, by the Bank of New Foundland, towards the Azores. The ocean has many other currents of a secondary character. Some of the principal currents are from 50 to 250 miles in breadth, and have a rapidity exceeding that of the largest navigable rivers of the Continent. The current which runs through the race of Alderney, has a velocity of eight English miles an hour. The Pentland Firth in ordinary spring-tides runs ten miles, and in storms thirteen. The current through the new passage in Bristol Channel is fourteen English miles an hour. The action of tides and currents upon land is analogous to rivers. Their operations are more concealed from our view than those of rivers, but extend over wider areas, and are consequently of more geological importance. The Orkney and Shetland Isles present the most rugged appearance from the continual abrading action of the waves. In Morayshire the sea has swept away the old town of Findhorn. In Arbroath in Forfarshire, gardens and houses have been carried away since the commencement of the present century by encroachments of the sea. A forest under the sea has been discovered for several miles along the northern coast of Fife. Near St. Andrews, in the same county, a considerable portion of land has been swept away. Land on both sides of the Firth of Forth has been consumed, especially at Newhaven and North Berwick.

England presents plenty evidences of submergence. The sea has made great inroads at Bamborough, and Tynemouth, in Northumberland, and at Hartlepool, and several other places in the county of Durham. From the mouth of the Tees to that of the Humber, the whole coast of Yorkshire is in the process of delapidation. In the old maps of Yorkshire, we find spots, now sea-banks in the sea, as the ancient sites of towns and villages—Auburn, Hartburn, and Hyde. At Owthorne for several years the sea has annually encroached an average of four yards. The ancient town of Dunwich in Suffolk, is now imbedded in the Sea.

The Isle of Sheppey, in Kent, is becoming less every year. The cliffs on the North, which are from sixty to eighty feet high, are decaying rapidly; fifty acres being lost in twenty years, from 1810 to 1830. The church now near the coast, is said to have been in the middle of the island in 1780; Reculver (Regulvium) was an important military station, in the time of the Romans, and as late as the time of Henry VIII., it was nearly a mile distant from the sea. In 1804, parts of the church-yard, with some adjoining houses was washed away, and the two spires of the church are now close to the sea. The Goodwin Sands are a remnant of land overwhelmed in some former times by the tidal action. Many eminent geologists entertain the opinion that at one time, England was joined to France; and that the channel between the two counties has been worn away by the continual abrading of the waves. The whole coast of Sussex has been incessantly encroached on by the sea: the site of ancient Brighton is under the sea. There is not a maritime county of England, but what bears ample evidence of ocean ravages. Other countries present similar results: in Holland, between the fourteenth and eighteenth centuries, parts of the Island of Walchern and Beveland were swept away, and several populous districts of Kadzand; and in 1658, the Island of Orisant was annihilated. One of the most important inroads of the sea, took place in 1421, when the tide pouring into the mouth of the united Meuse and Waal, burst through a dam in the district between Dort and Gertrudenberg, and overwhelmed seventy-two villages; of these, thirty-five were never afterwards seen, not even in ruin. In modern times, half of the peninsula of Friesland, has been submerged by the sea. Every country of the world bounded by the sea, exhibits similar instances of change. But as already observed, the tides and currents of the ocean exercise a productive as well as a destructive agency; new land being formed by the ruins of the old. The worn material being carried away by the transporting power of the currents and tides, and deposited in new situations. An extraordinary gain of land is described to have taken place at the head of the Red Sea, the Isthmus of Suez having doubled in breadth since the days of Herodotus. The country called Tehemah on the Arabian side of the Gulph has increased from three to six miles since the christian era. Inland from the present ports, are the ruins of ancient towns which were once on the sea shore. Land is rapidly forming on the coast of Syria. The German ocean is filling up with sand banks or shoals which occupy one fifth of the ocean, or to about one third of the whole extent of England and Scotland. These shoals are gradually increasing, and will no doubt, ultimately become islands. In the silent depths of the ocean are gradually forming by the ruins of existing land, the materials of future continents and isles. To enter into an enumeration of in-

stances, in which, the effects of these mighty agencies are apparent would be an endless task.

The sediment washed into the sea, is disposed in lamina or thin layers separated from each other by lines of demarcation, and as they accumulate form into solid rocks by the force of super-incumbent pressure; it is clear, then, that stratified rocks are in the course of formation over extensive area, in existing seas, and that in course of time, these must become solid portions of the crust of the earth.

In the fresh and salt water deposits, the bones of animals peculiar to each district, where the deposition is going on, become imbedded; as for instance, the animals that inhabit the banks of the Ganges, and the reptiles and tigers that swarm in the Delta, when they die, are liable to be continually entombed in the new formations constantly going on with all other rivers. Fresh and salt-water fishes, and shells, quadrupeds &c., that are swept away by torrents, or by tides, and currents, are liable to be entombed, within the delta's of the river that transport them, or in the bottom of the sea, by the continual deposition of the water-worn materials of existing continents and islands which is in unceasing progress. Thus the entombment of existing species, may furnish to future geologist matters of as interesting speculation, as do the reptiles and mammoths of the secondary and tertiary formations at the present day; and thus also is given us a key to solve the agencies that formed the strata in which are buried the monster saurian and gigantic quadrupeds of long bygone times.

The igneous class of agents remains to be considered, such as volcanoes and earthquakes, those internal fires which so often devastate extensive districts of country, producing great inequalities on the surface of the earth. The South American volcanic regions are very extensive, and have been the scene of many important irruptions, as evidenced in the immense quantities of cooled lava and scoræ which flank the mountains. But few great eruptions, however, have taken place in modern times. Mexico has five active volcanoes, with many mountains that bear evidence of once being in an active state. The most of the West Indies are volcanic, and in many of them irruptions have recently taken place, of which St Domingo and St Vincent furnish important examples. Many active volcanoes are found in Kamshata and Iceland, the largest is Klutschan, lat. $56^{\circ} 3' N.$ which rises from the sea the prodigious height of 15,000 feet. Mount Hecla is a celebrated Icelandic volcano. In the Japanese islands the number of burning mountains is very great, and many violent shocks have been experienced. Throughout the Loo Choo Archipelago, the Philippine Islands, the Molluccas, and New Guinea, volcanic mountains are numerous distributed. There are thirty-eight considerable volcanoes in Java, some of them 10,000 feet high. Sumatra is a volcanic region. New Zealand and New Britain both possess active vol-

canoes, and others are scattered widely throughout the southern ocean, of which those in Owhyhee are much celebrated. Another great region of internal disturbance extends through a large portion of central Asia, from China and Tartary through Lake Aral and the Caspian Sea to Caucasus, and the countries adjoining the Black Sea, and then again through Asia Minor to Syria, and westward to the Grecian Isles, Greece, Naples, Sicily, the southern part of Spain, Portugal, and the Azores.

The irruptions of these mighty volcanic chains have been productive of great devastation. Herculaneum and Pompeii were buried in lava and scoræ during an eruption of Vesuvius in Italy in the year 79. In modern times the same neighbourhood had suffered much from volcanic agency. In 1669, the lava of Mount Etna in Sicily, after overflowing fourteen towns and villages, arrived at the walls of the city of Catania. These had been raised purposely to protect the city, but the burning fluid accumulated till it rose to the top of the rampart, which was sixty feet in height, and then it fell in a fiery cascade and overwhelmed the city. At present the traveller may see the solid lava curling over the top of the rampart, as if in the act of falling. This great current travelled fourteen miles before it reached the sea, where it still was six hundred yards wide and forty feet deep. Great eruptions of Etna have taken place in 1811 and 1819, during which the surrounding country was widely devastated.

An eruption of Shaptar Jökul, in Iceland, took place in 1783, which lasted nearly two years. Two branches of lava emerged from the mountain and flowed in nearly opposite directions, the greatest was fifty and the lesser forty miles in length. The extreme width of the one was from twelve to fourteen miles, of the other about seven; it ranged in depth from a hundred to six hundred feet. In Mexico, in 1759, an area occupied by fertile fields of sugar cane and indigo was suddenly changed. Six volcanic cones were found, the least 300 feet in height, and Jurullo, the greatest, 1600 feet above the level of the plain. Great streams of basaltic lava, including fragments of granite rock were ejected. A volcanic island called Graham's Island, made its appearance in the Mediterranean in 1831, near the coast of Sicily, and rose gradually to the height of 200 feet above the sea, and three miles in circumference, after which it gradually reduced till it became level with the surrounding waters. In April, 1815, an eruption proceeded from Mount Tamboro, in the island of Sumbaya near Java. Of 12,000 people, only 26 survived on the island. Ashes were carried 300 miles in sufficient quantities to darken the air. The darkness in the day-time was deeper than the darkest night. The most important effect of this great eruption was the submersion of the town of Tamboro. The sea encroached upon the shore, so that it remained eighteen feet deep where previously there was land.

But extensive though the effects of volcanic

agency are manifested, they are far outstripped by those great convulsions of nature, earthquakes. In February 1835 an earthquake took place in Forth, which was felt along from north to south, between Copiopo and Chilo, and east and west, from Mendoza to Juan Fernandez. One of the effects of this earthquake was the elevation of the island of St. Maria. An earthquake took place in Chili in 1822, by which the coast for the distance of above a hundred miles, was raised several feet. In the delta of the river Indus, in 1819, a mound called Ellah Band, or the Mount of God, was thrown up by an earthquake, measuring upwards of fifty miles in length: in some parts sixteen miles wide, and ten feet in height. About the same time the fort and village of Sendree were submerged, the tips of the houses being seen above the water after the shock, and a tract of land 2,000 square miles in extent converted into an inland sea or lake. In 1772 a volcanic mountain called Pahandagany, and an extent of country surrounding, in the island of Java, fourteen miles long and six broad, was swallowed up in the bowels of the earth; forty villages were destroyed, and 2,957 inhabitants perished. The bed of the Pacific ocean, near Concepcion, in Chili, in 1750, was elevated twenty-four feet. A violent earthquake visited Jamaica, in 1692, by which the greater part of the city of 55. Port Royal sunk under the water. In 1795 the quay and harbour of Lisbon sunk and swallowed some thousands of people, besides vessels and boats: the place where the quay stood is now one hundred fathoms deep. By an earthquake, in Carracas, in 1790, the earth at one place sunk in, leaving a lake 2,400 feet in diameter, and from eighty to a hundred feet deep. The Pico, in the Mollucas, accounted of equal height to the Peak of Teneriffe, was swallowed up in 1603, leaving behind a lake.

In addition to the force of the earthquake, in elevating and depressing the earth's surface, modern investigation has discerned another power analogous in its origin to the earthquake, but of a more slow and imperceptible nature—a gradual appearing force. This force has been proved to be in operation in Sweden, not only by the traditions of the inhabitants, but by the recent investigations of scientific men. Mr Lyel, from having visited Sweden, shows it to be in existence in that country, and that the coast, or the shore of the Baltic, rises several feet in a century; and, while this elevation is going on, it has been proved that the coast of Greenland, for an extent of six hundred miles, is gradually sinking. Elevation of land has also been detected in Norway. If in connection with these facts on the great elevation and consequent subsidence caused by sub-marine volcanoes, and that St. Helena, the Azores, the Landrones, Iceland, &c. are their effects, we shall perceive sufficient reason for all the phenomena of elevation and depression which the crust of the earth at present exhibits. New islands are thrown up from the bottom of the deep; the bottom of the

ocean is made replete with inequalities; and gradual up-heaving forces lift up the whole, until the lowest depressions become dry land. Volcanic islands become then mountains, divided into valleys by repeated shocks, and the sub-marine formations or depositions become stratified rocks.

The phenomena we have presented in explaining and illustrating the aqueous and igneous agents of change, must appear sufficient to explain all the appearances presented by the earth's crust. The action of rivers, torrents, tides, and currents, exhibit the process of abrasion which is continually going on, and the manner in which deltas, islands, and continents are formed; and the manner in which land, lacustrine, and marine animals are carried away and imbedded in sedimentary depositions. Volcanoes, earthquakes, and the upheaving force, explain why stratified rocks are found near the highest mountains, and why the inhabitants of former seas have been found buried in elevated regions far distant from the existing ocean. The facts we have given warrant the generalization, that the most elevated situation have, at some time or other, been under water, and from thence elevated; and that the sea has successively occupied every quarter of the globe. The strata which compose the earth's crust, bear evidence of slow deposition in still waters during countless ages, and from thence elevated; and the greenstone, porphyries, and granites which rest below the stratified rocks, and often rend them and overcap them, are powerful evidences that their origin is the same as the modern lavas of Vesuvius and Etna, and other volcanic regions. In the language of Robert Dale Owen to Origin Bachelor, on the same subject—“How impossible, on the theory of one universal deluge, to explain such phenomena as these, which present themselves with trifling modifications throughout the whole extent of either hemispheres. They unlock to us the secrets of a stupendous succession (we might almost say) of worlds, of which a few remains hardened into immortality by that very time which has mouldered so many to impalpable dust, offers themselves as enduring witnesses of what was even beyond the utmost verge of tradition—strange links, whose silent eloquence connects us, as it were, with the living things of a forgotten eternity.”

In this inquiry, we have shown gradual change, through vast cycles of time, to be the true theory of the world's geological history. The different strata, deposited in regular order, and teeming with organic remains, yet exhibiting different characteristics, and belonging to different epochs of existence, strike at the root of the hypothesis of one great universal submersion, or a series of submersions. The story must, therefore, ere long share the same fate as the belief in the philosopher's stone and the elixir of life, or, in griffins, salamanders, astrology, and witchcraft.

FREE-THINKERS' INFORMATION FOR THE PEOPLE.

"LET ALL MEN HAVE FULL LIBERTY TO TEACH AND MAINTAIN WHATEVER OPINIONS THEY
MAY CHOOSE."—*Melancthon.*

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ILLUSTRATIONS OF SCRIPTURAL CHARACTERS.

THERE are two modes of teaching usually adopted by moralists, namely,—precept and example; the former consisting in maxims founded on the rights and duties which appear to spring out of the relationships of mankind in a state of society, and the latter actions in conformity with those principles of morality. In teaching by example, it is usual to take, as illustrations, the lives of eminent men, that those to whom the instruction is directed may profit by such bright patterns of virtue, and be induced to follow in their path. Modern theologians, in the spirit of this philosophy, have extensively employed the mode of teaching by example, from a calculation that biographical sketches of those they conceive to be great men, would excite a spirit of emulation in their followers, and stimulate the lukewarm Christian to greater exertion in the practical embodiment of his theoretical principles. Hence biographies of saints, martyrs, and divines exist in abundance, and especially lives of, and wordy comments on, those whom they look up to as the illustrious *par excellence* of their faith—the leading characters of their Bible. We have innumerable catechisms respecting the "most faithful man," "the meekest man," "the strongest man," and "the man according to God's own heart," with "lives of Joseph and his brethren," and "Christ and his apostles" in abundance. Now, as we, in common with our Christian brethren, think teaching by example a good mode of impressing the human mind, whether as illustrative of virtue or vice; and as we think sufficient honesty has not hitherto characterised the religious commentators who have attempted this work, especially in their delineations of scriptural characters, we are induced to supply the deficiency, by a faithful representation of the "fathers of the faithful," in which we shall "nought extenuate, nor ought set down in malice," but take the Bible as our guide in all matters of fact illustrative of their proceedings.

We begin our illustration of the scripture worthies, by the father of all flesh.

ADAM,

the father of all mankind, is said to have been produced by God on the sixth day of the creation—his body being made of the dust of the earth, and the breath of life breathed into his nostrils,

so that "he became a living soul." He is put into a garden to keep it and to dress it, and is made to impose a name on all the animals of the earth; after which he is caused to fall into a deep sleep, and a rib taken from him, of which a woman is made. They live together without being ashamed to see each other naked. There was a tree in the garden, of which they were forbidden by God to eat, on the pain of death; but the woman, seduced by a serpent, is induced to eat, and to persuade Adam to eat of it also. From that time they perceived they were naked, and got themselves aprons made of fig leaves sewed together. God came and pronounced to them the punishment he would inflict on them—drove them out of the garden, and made them coats of skin. Adam had children born to him, one of whom killed his brother, and at last the father of the race died at the age of 930 years.

This is all we have on the subject of Adam in the Bible, though a great number of curious things have been added to this by Jewish and Christian commentators. It has been said he knew more the first day of his life, than any man besides can learn by long experience. This is, however, scarcely reconcileable with the absence of all knowledge of good and evil, and of his being unconscious of his state of nudity. Cojetanus, who ventures to rob him of a knowledge of the stars and of the elements, is much censured for it. Pinedo makes him superlatively wise on all subjects excepting politics. He is also said to have been very beautiful as well as wise, combining the greatest strength, with gracefulness of form.

A great number of the Rabbis believed that Adam's body was created double, male on the one side and female on the other: and that the two bodies were joined together by the shoulder, the heads looking directly opposite, like the heads of Janus. Thus they pretended that when God made Eve, he only divided the original body into two; the part which was of the masculine sex forming Adam, and that which was of the feminine sex Eve. Mannasseh Ben Israel, a learned Rabbi of the seventeenth century, maintained this fantastical opinion; and Maimonides, a celebrated Jew, had already entertained a similar notion. The pious Madame de Bourignon, a female fanatic of the seventeenth century, affirms Adam was a herma-

phrodite, having the principle of both sexes within him, and the virtue to produce his likeness without the help of woman. "Men," says she, "think that they have been created as they are at present, but it is not true, seeing that sin has disfigured the work of God in them, and instead of men as they ought to be, they are become monsters in nature, divided into two imperfect sexes, unable to produce their like alone, as trees and plants do, which in that point have more perfection than men or women, who are incapable to produce by themselves, but only in conjunction with each other, and in pain and misery." She stated she had seen in a trance how Adam was made before the fall, and how he alone could produce other men. That his body was more pure and transparent than crystal, light and volatile in appearance. He was of a larger stature than men are at present; his hair short and curled, and his upper lip covered with small hair. The Jews have made Adam a great author, and some of them pretend to have seen portions of his writings; among which was a penitential psalm which he and his wife sung after the fall. It is further said that he died in the place where Jerusalem was afterwards built, and was buried in a neighbouring hill, being the same one where Christ was afterwards crucified. According to Barcephah, Noah took his bones into the ark with him, and after the flood divided them among his three sons. If all these apocryphal accounts were incorporated into the original text, it would make a nice improvement on the story; and as the exercise of faith is especially desired among true believers, it would do much in the way of strengthening this Christian virtue, by adding to the intensity of the dose. The "father of the faithful" next commands attention.

ABRAHAM.

Abraham was the son of Terah, and a Chaldean, so says the divine narrative. It is said, Genesis chap. xi. verse 26, "And Terah lived seventy years, and begat Abraham, Nabor and Haran." Abraham is represented as being seventy-five years old when he went out of the land of Haran after the death of his father Terah, the potter; but the same book tells us that Terah having begotten Abraham at the age of seventy years, lived to be two hundred and five; and afterwards, that Abraham went out of Haran; which seems to signify, that it was after the death of his father. Either the author did not know how to dispose his narration, or it is clear from the book of Genesis itself, that Abraham was one hundred and thirty-five years, instead of seventy-five, when he quitted Mesopotamia. He leaves the fruitful banks of the Euphrates for the barren region of Sichem; God having chosen that he should go this journey, that he might see the land his descendants were to occupy several ages after him. Scarcely had he arrived in this mountainous country when he was compelled to quit it, and seek a subsistence in

Egypt. The distance from Sichem to Memphis being *only* six hundred miles; a pretty long journey for one a hundred and fifty years old.

He brought with him his wife, Sarah, who was extremely young, and almost an infant, compared with himself, for she was only sixty-five. As she was very young, he resolved to turn her beauty to good account. "Say, I pray thee, that thou art my sister, that it may be well with me for thy sake." He should have rather advised her to pass off as his daughter. The king of Egypt falls in love with the young and lovely Sarah, and gives the pretended brother abundance of sheep, oxen, he asses, she asses, camels, men-servants, and maid-servants, which proves that Egypt was then a powerful and well-regulated, consequently an ancient kingdom, and that those were well rewarded who came and offered their sisters to the kings. The Lord plagues the king and his household with very great sores, on account of the appropriation of Sarah. The text does not say how the king came to know that this dangerous beauty was Abraham's wife; but it seems he did come to know it, and restored her. Sarah's beauty seems to have been unalterable, for twenty-six years afterwards, when she was ninety years old, pregnant, and travelling through the dominions of a Phœnician king, named Abimelech, Abraham passed her off a second time for his sister. This king was as much smitten with her charms as the king of Egypt had been; but God appeared to this Abimelech in a dream, and threatened him with death if he touched his new mistress. Here also Abraham got sheep and oxen, and men-servants and maid-servants. It might be said he made rich principally by his wife. It must be confessed that Sarah's conduct was as extraordinary as the lasting nature of her charms. Abraham feared death more than conjugal dishonour, and must have been far from being a jealous husband. He leaves to the paternal care of the Lord the honour and chastity of his wife; but he is beforehand with his life, and neglects no human means. Commentators have written many volumes to justify Abraham's conduct. Altogether, these transactions say little for either his courage or honesty, and furnish but poor examples of virtue to the faithful.

The remainder of Abraham's history is subject to great difficulties. God, who frequently appeared to, and made several treaties with him, one day sent three angels to him in the valley of Mamre. The patriarch gave them bread, veal, butter, and milk to eat. The three spirits dined, and, after dinner, they sent for Sarah, who had baked the bread. One of the angels, whom the text calls the Lord, promised Sarah, that, in the course of a year, she should have a son. Sarah, who was then ninety-four, laughed at the promise, a proof that she confessed her decrepitude—a proof that, according to the Scripture itself, human nature was not then very different to what it is now. Nevertheless, the following year, as

already stated, this aged woman, after becoming pregnant, captivated King Abimelech.

One of the most remarkable circumstances of the life of Abraham, is, that before he had begotten Isaac, he caused himself, his son Ishmael, and all his servants, to be circumcised. It seems he had adopted that custom among the Egyptians, yet for what purpose of utility it is impossible to say.

It seems astonishing that God, after causing Isaac to be born to such old parents, should afterwards order that father to murder the son, whom he had given to him contrary to every expectation. This strange order from God seems to show that when this history was written, the sacrifice of human victims was customary among the Jews, as witness the vow of Jephtha. It has been supposed by some learned men, that Abraham is the Brahmah of the Indians; by others, that he is the Zoroaster of the Persians. It is, however, probable that inasmuch as the Jews took the name of the angels from the Babylonians, and that they called God by the names of Eloï, or Eloa, Adonai, Jehovah, Jao, after the Phœnicians, that they also learned the name of Abraham, or Ibrahim, from the Chaldeans; for the ancient religion of all the countries from the Euphrates to the Oxus, was called Kish Ibrahim, or Milat Ibrahim. This is confirmed by the learned Hyde.

ISAAC.

The patriarch Isaac appears to have been a plain simple man, extremely credulous, and oftener the dupe than the deceiver. Although he attempted a fraud upon Abimelech, by denying his wife, in imitation of what his father had previously done, yet he got nothing by it. Rebecca his wife, and Jacob his son, both imposed on him in a gross manner; and by the superstition in which he was bred, he performed acts of injustice his heart revolted against.

JACOB.

The name is illustrative of the character signifying a cheat or deceiver. He not only took advantage of the hunger of his brother Esau to bargain him out of his birth-right—a most unfair as well as unfeeling transaction, but also cheated him, by lies and deceit, out of his father's blessing. Poor Esau had no chance against lying Jacob and his intriguing mother. Jacob, for his unprincipled conduct to his brother, had to flee to Padanaram, to his uncle Laban, who soon beat him hollow with his own weapons; for after the former had served seven years for the best looking of his uncle's daughters, Rachel, the old sharper, on the night of the wedding feast, when, it is presumed, Jacob was rather heady, put the wrong sister to bed with him. This mistake, however, was easily remedied, for he got the other daughter after serving a new apprenticeship of seven years to sheep herding. Thus the patriarch had his two cousins as wives; but, not content with these, he made concubines

of their two maids—conduct which in our days would constitute the crimes of incest, polygamy, and adultery. Jacob's next exploit was, tricking Laban out of the best of his cattle, by means of hazel rods in the water troughs, a device which, we believe, has never succeeded elsewhere. In consequence of this, Laban's family got out of temper, and no wonder; and old Laban withdraws his countenance from him. The Lord is made a principal party to this nefarious transaction, according to the "sacred text." Jacob, to save himself from the consequences of his cheating propensity, which appears to have been his ruling passion, makes what would be called at the present day, a moonlight flitting: for it is stated "he stole away unawares." Rachel, the favourite wife, taking her father's gods with her. Jacob is overtaken by his father-in-law, and, after some words between them, a reconciliation takes place. Jacob shortly after comes in the way of his brother Esau, and, recollecting his former base and treacherous conduct, he thought it best to pacify him with a present, which he despatched beforehand; and upon meeting with him, he addresses him with great obsequiousness and dissimulation,—a striking characteristic of the man. Esau was too generous and high-minded to keep alive the feeling of revenge for old injuries, and accordingly treated his deceitful and hypocritical brother with great kindness. While on this excursion, Jacob is represented as wrestling all night with the Lord, on which occasion the latter could not prevail against the former until Jacob's thigh was put out of joint, when an end was put to the sparring; and the patriarch for his pugnacious qualities received a new name. It is further stated that, Jacob saw the Lord "face to face." This story bears out the fact, that the Jews had no notion of God except as a person in human shape, who could eat, drink, and fight, as circumstances might require.

After this exploit Jacob, now Israel, settled at Shechem, where the young Prince of the country fell in love with the only daughter of the house of the faithful Dinah, with whom he had an amour, and as an atonement for which he asked her in marriage. This was not satisfactory however to the sons of Jacob, who, acting in the true spirit of their father's character, had recourse to a scheme of black treachery to gain their ends. Pretending that it would be dishonour for their sister to marry one that was uncircumcised, they induced Hamor and Shechem to comply with the ceremony, and whose example was followed by all the men of the city; a clear proof of the honourable intentions of the young Prince and his family. While they were smarting under the rite, on the third day Simeon and Levi fell upon them, and murdered all the males, made their wives and children prisoners, and robbed and plundered the whole town. This was a tolerable omen of the after conduct of the "chosen people," worthy of the ancestors of the Midianites' murderers; still one is at a loss to conceive how two men could kill all the inhabi-

tants of a city, even though out of fighting-trim from being circumcised. Faith, however must be exercised with holy forbearance, when reason seems to contradict the "inspired" history. Jacob appears to have been anything but an intelligent and impartial parent, desirous of acting justly to all his offspring, for instead, we find him petting and pampering the children of one of his wives, especially Joseph, at the expense of all the others. To such an extent did he carry his dotage, that he clothed out the favourite son like a harlequin, with a coat of many colours, and so filled the young man's head with ridiculous and egotistical notions of his own importance, that all his brothers became arrayed against him; and to make matters still worse, he started the rehearsal of dreams, in which he figures as number one, and all the rest are represented as doing him obeisance. As might be expected from thus foolishly petting one son, to the exclusion of the others, the slighted brothers conspired against the vain-glorious Joseph, who at last was sold to a band of Ishmaelites and taken into Egypt, where he soon made a fortune as an interpreter of dreams, and a forestaller and monopolizer of agricultural produce. Jacob after fretting for a time about the loss of his spoiled son, found him at last in Egypt during a famine, to which place he and all the family shortly after emigrate, and where Jacob died leaving his offspring slaves in the hands of the Egyptian King.

The next illustrious character among the "chosen people," is their celebrated lawgiver,

MOSES.

Moses is represented in the sacred text as the son of a Levite, and who, when a child, having been exposed in an ark of bulrushes in the side of the river, was found by Pharaoh's daughter, by whom he is brought up, and educated in all the learning of Egypt, particularly in the art of conjuring. His first feat of importance was killing an Egyptian, who had been engaged in a dispute with an Israelite, and burying him in the sand; for which, being likely to be found out, he fled to Midian, where he got, as a wife, a daughter of Jethro, the priest, and where, no doubt, he got initiated in those tricks of deceiving the vulgar, for which he afterwards became so famous. He did not stay long tending his father-in-law's sheep, for it is said the Lord appeared to him in a burning bush, and ordered him to go down into Egypt to deliver the "chosen people" from their bondage. Moses having received his instructions, sets out on his hazardous undertaking, and immediately after we read that one of the first attempts in his new line of magic was changing his rod into a serpent; then turning all the waters of the kingdom into blood; causing frogs to cover the surface of the land; changing all the dust into lice; filling the air with venomous winged insects; afflicting the men and animals

with frightful ulcers; and sending hail, tempests and thunder to ruin all the country; and after various other cantrips, finally killing all the first-born of man and animals, commencing with the son of the king. In a number of those exploits he is imitated by the Egyptian magicians, such as changing the rod into a serpent, the turning of water into blood, after Moses had so changed *all the water* in the land, and the making of frogs. But when Moses fills the land of Egypt with lice, changing all the dust into them, his entire superiority appears; the magi cannot imitate it. It appears to have been a sort of contest between the God of the Jews, and the gods of the Egyptians, in which both parties are equal until Moses gains the victory in the article of the lice and the subsequent miracles.

Moses is at last successful in gaining the release of the Israelites, who, after borrowing everything they can off the unsuspecting Egyptians, by the command of the Lord, make a clandestine elopement. In passing through the Red Sea, the waters are suspended in mountains to the right hand and to the left to allow them a passage through; and Pharaoh and his army who pursued and had overtaken them at this place, is swallowed up and drowned in the waves. Moses leads his band into a wilderness on the way to the "promised land," in which desert the "chosen people" are doomed to wander about for forty years, quarrelling occasionally with Moses and the Lord for taking them into such a horrid place; or otherwise levying black mail on all the tribes they came in contact with, as see; for instance, the Midianites. For their "murmurings" and discontentedness none of the multitude, however, that left Egypt, with the exception of two persons, are permitted by the Lord to reach the land "overflowing with milk and honey." Moses, after superintending all their movements in the desert; instigating them to plunder; passing himself off as in direct communication with the Lord; and imposing on them a religious law, founded upon this supposed communication; besides working miracles occasionally, to keep them, it is said, from dying of hunger and thirst, or being destroyed by fiery serpents, at last dies on Mount Horeb, without entering that "land of promise," with the representations of which he had so long stimulated the plundering and murdering propensities of his vagabond banditti. With this, ends the scripture life of Moses—a life that by the most favourable construction cannot be recommended as an example of either honesty, meekness, or humanity.

The Jews have not been content with this scriptural life of Moses, for they have had several lives of him, independently of the Pentateuch. Several of these old Hebrew manuscripts were withdrawn from their coverings of dust about the year 1517; and the learned Gilbert, who was a perfect master of their language, translated them about the year 1533. We have here the following additional particulars respecting the life and char-

acter of Moses.—About three years after Moses was found on the banks of the river by Pharaoh's daughter, her father Pharaoh took a fresh wife, on which occasion he held a great feast. His wife was at his right hand, and at his left was his daughter, with little Moses. The child in sport took the crown and put it on his head. Balaam, the magician, the king's eunuch, then recollected that his majesty had dreamed a dream, in which an infant was represented to do him great mischief, and accordingly he called out—"Behold the child who is one day to do you so much mischief. What he has just now done is a proof that he has already formed the design of dethroning you. He must instantly be put to death." This idea pleased Pharaoh much. They were about to kill little Moses, when the Lord sent his angel Gabriel, disguised as one of Pharaoh's officers, to say to him, "My lord, we should not put to death an innocent child, which is not yet come to the years of discretion. He put on your crown only because he wanted judgment. You have only to let a ruby and a burning coal be presented to him; if he choose the coal, it is clear that he is a block-head, who will never do any harm; but if he take the ruby, it will be a sign that he has too much sense to burn his fingers: then let him be slain."

A ruby and a coal were immediately brought. Moses did not fail to take the ruby; but the angel Gabriel, by a sort of legerdemain, slipped a coal into the place of the precious stone. Moses put the coal into his mouth, and burned his tongue so horribly that he stammered ever after; and this is the reason the Jewish lawgiver could never articulate.

Moses as he grows up was a favourite with Pharaoh. When fifteen, a Hebrew came to complain to him that an Egyptian had beaten him, after lying with his wife: Moses killed the Egyptian. Pharaoh ordered the head of Moses to be cut off. The executioner struck him, but God instantly changed Moses' neck into a marble column, and sent the angel Michael to him, who, in three days, conducted Moses beyond the frontiers. Moses fled to the king of Ethiopia, who was at war with the Arabs. Micano, the king, makes Moses commander-in-chief; and, after Micano's death, Moses is chosen king, and marries the widow. He lived with her forty years without touching her. The angry queen at length called together the states of the realm, complained that Moses was of no service to her, and concluded by driving him away, and placing on the throne the son of the late king.

The country of Midian next receives Moses. Jethro the Priest, who thought his fortune would be made if he could put Moses into the hands of the king of Egypt, confines Moses into a low cell, and feeds him with bread and water. Moses grew fat very fast, at which the old priest was quite astonished; he was not aware that his daughter Sephora had fallen in love with the prisoner, and carried him partridges and quails, with excellent new wine every day. Jethro concluded that

Moses was protected by God, and did not give him up to Pharaoh.

However, Jethro the priest wished to have his daughter married. He had in his garden a tree of sapphire, on which was engraven the word *Jaho* or *Jehovah*. He caused it to be published throughout the country that he would give his daughter to him who could tear up the sapphire tree. Sephora's lovers presented themselves, but none of them could so much as bend the tree. Moses, who was only *seventy-seven years old*, tore it up at once without an effort. He got married, and had a son born to him, called Gershon.

Shortly after this, when walking out, he met the Lord, who ordered him off to Egypt to work miracles before Pharaoh's court. Moses took his wife and son with him, and, on the way to Egypt, met Aaron, who had been sent on the same errand. The latter, who had thought his brother very wrong in marrying a Midianitish woman, called her a very coarse name, and little Gershon a bastard, and sent them the shortest way back to their own country.

Moses and Aaron then went to Pharaoh's court by themselves. The gate of the palace was guarded by two lions of an enormous size. Balaam, one of the king's magicians, sets the lions upon them; but Moses touched them with his rod, and the lions prostrating themselves, licked the feet of Aaron and Moses, and they are then brought before the king, that they may strive with his magicians who can work the most miracles. The author here relates the ten plagues nearly as they are related in Exodus; he only adds that Moses covered all Egypt with lice to the depth of a cubit. According to this writer, it was not the Jews who fled through the Red Sea; it was Pharaoh who fled that way with his army: the Jews ran after him; the waters separated right and left to see them fight, and all the Egyptians except the king were slain upon the land. Then the king, finding that his own was the weaker side, asked pardon of God, Michael and Gabriel were sent to him, and conveyed him to the city of Nineveh, where he reigned four hundred years.

At the death of Moses an altercation about his soul takes place between Michael and Gabriel the good angels, and Samael the bad angel, in which the latter is worsted. It is to this history that St Jude the Apostle refers, when he says, that the archangel Michael contended with the devil about the soul of Moses; from this it is evident, that St Jude looked upon it as a canonical book.

After reading the exploits of Moses, both scriptural and apocryphal, who will say that the adventures of St George and the Dragon, or of the other Champions of Christendom are ridiculous absurdities; if the former are worthy of belief, the latter are quite reasonable and probable, and ought to form a portion of all well digested histories of Europe; especially when we consider that the arguments in support of the truth of either adventures are about equal.

Apart, however, from the marvellous so mixed up with the life of Moses, by the rules of reasonable criticism, it is very likely that Moses conducted a small people from the confines of Egypt. There was among the Egyptians an ancient tradition, related by Plutarch in his Isis and Osiris, that Tiphon the Father of Jerossclain, and Juddccas fled from Egypt on an ass. A tradition no less ancient and more general is, that the Jews were driven from Egypt, either as a body of unruly brigands, or as a people infected with the leprosy. This double accusation carries its probability even from the land of Goshen, which they had inhabited, a neighbouring land of the Arabs, and where the disease of leprosy peculiar to the Arabs might be common. It appears even by scripture, that this people went from Egypt against their will. The seventeenth chapter of Deuteronomy forbids kings to think of leading the Jews back to Egypt. That all the books in which the flight from Egypt and the exploits of Moses are recorded, were written at a very late date, from old traditions, will be made clear in the ensuing treatise on the internal evidences of the Bible.

SAMUEL.

The circumstances under which Samuel was born, are similar to those of Isaac and others of the Bible worthies. The Lord, it is said, had "shut up the womb" of his mother Hannah, for what reason does not appear, which so afflicted the good woman that she was continually in tears about it; until by an extraordinary fit of devotion, she got so far into the good graces of the Lord that "Elkanah knew his wife, and the Lord remembered her," by which means little Samuel was born. The Bible historians make the Lord a party to some strange affairs, and this is one out of the number. Samuel from his infancy was initiated in all the mysteries of Priestcraft, and commenced the profession of Prophet when very young. Under the discipline of old Eli, he soon became proficient in all the intricacies of his adopted calling. One of the first adventures of the young prophet was playing at a kind of *bo-peep* with the Lord. It is said in Samuel chap. iii. that the word of the Lord was precious in those days, there was no open vision, and Samuel having gone to sleep in the temple was waked by some one calling on his name, on which he got up and went to Eli to know if he had been calling. Having got an answer in the negative he went to sleep again, when a second time Samuel was called out, again he made inquiry of Eli, and received a similar answer. On going the third time to sleep he received another call, which so convinced him that Eli was the cause of this interruption, that he presented himself saying in a decided manner, "here I am, for *thou didst call on me.*" The old prophet gave him some advice how to conduct himself when called on again by the Lord, for such he surmised the intruder to be. "So Samuel went and lay down in his place, when the *Lord came and stood* and called as at the

other times Samuel, Samuel," Samuel in reply made a gracious answer, and then the Lord in his usual vindictive style began to denounce the house of Eli, and to threaten vengeance on all its members. The idea of the Lord conveyed in the foregoing passages is that of a man walking about the temple like a midnight patrol, and wakening up little Samuel to tell him how much out of humour he was, and what he intended doing with those who had vexed him so much. Such representations of Deity are quite sufficient, to make men reject the book, as an imposition on the credulity of the human race. No doubt this story of Samuel and the Lord, is a cunning manufacture of some Jewish priest, perhaps Ezra, in after times, from some loose tradition current among the people.

The first time we hear of Samuel acting as a judge of the people is at Mizpah, where the Philistines, taking advantage of the assemblage, attacked them; but Samuel, by offering a sacrifice, and crying unto the Lord, procured a great thunder-storm to be sent among them, which put them entirely to the route. "And they came no more into the coasts of Israel; and the hand of the Lord was against the Philistines all the days of Samuel." Yet we find them in the lands many times after this, in the days of Samuel, see 1st Samuel, chap. xiii. We are told in chap. vii. verse 15, "That Samuel judged Israel all the days of his life," though chap. viii. assures us that "when Samuel was old, that he made his sons judges over Israel," but they "turned aside after lucre, and took bribes, and perverted judgment." This does not say much for the training of the family. Saul was made king before Samuel was an old man, so that it is clearly impossible the latter could "judge Israel all the days of his life." These contradictions, however repugnant to reason, are excellent salient points for the exercise of faith. Samuel, though he judged Israel, and went a circuit to Bethel, Gilgal, and Mizpah, does not appear to have been known for more than a simple man of God, who could give intelligence concerning their lost cattle for a small gratuity. It was when Saul inquired of him respecting his father's strayed asses, that the former was put in the way of becoming a king. The people were clamorous for a king, having had enough of priestly domination; and Samuel, who wanted to judge Israel in reality all the days of his life, no doubt thought Saul a fit tool on whom to confer the mock show of royalty, and to humour the population; hence he managed to secure his election by the lots, taking care, at the same time, to shew how much he was opposed to the new regimen. It was not long ere Saul gave mortal offence to his patron, by his mercy to Agag, the king of the Amalekites, for which humanity Samuel says, "it repented the Lord that he had made him (Saul) king over Israel;" and, to convince the people of the tender mercies of the Lord, and to show the superior humanity and benevolence of his priests and prophets, like an expert butcher, Samuel took and "hewed Agag to pieces

before the Lord at Gilgal." From that day Samuel came no more to see Saul till "the day of his death." Nevertheless, he went privately to a shepherd called David, and anointed him, thinking him likely to be less squeamish in matters of killing and butchering than Saul—a selection which subsequent events amply confirmed. It appears that Samuel was a powerful instigator and abettor of David's rebellion, and of the distresses the country suffered on that account. Had he done so at the present day, he would have been convicted of high treason, and hanged or transported. We hear very little more of Samuel after this, except that he died and was buried, on which occasion David decamped to "the wilderness of Paran," a plain proof that Samuel was a promoter of the seditious views of David.

"The man after God's own heart," the successor of Saul, and the father of that prince of wisdom and vengery, Solomon, next commands our consideration.

DAVID.

David was the youngest of the eight sons of Jesse, the Bethlehemite, and while a youth a shepherd by profession. Shortly after his being selected by Samuel to be the successor of Saul, he was sent to the latter to cure him of his fits of phrenzy by playing on the harp, at which he was an adept; a service that made him so much beloved by Saul that he kept him in his house and made him his armour bearer. The scripture says afterwards, that David used to go home from time to time, to take care of his father's flock. His first exploit in fighting was killing a swaggering Philistine called Goliath, who, proud of his strength and gigantic stature, had challenged daily the Israelitish camp, but which challenges no one durst accept, until David, who had been sent with some provisions for his brothers, overhearing the blustering bravado of the giant, undertook it, and engaged to fight him single handed. David succeeded in killing the giant by a stone from a sling. He then took the Philistine's own sword and cut off his head, which he presented to Saul. Though David had been previously engaged to play the harp before the king, it is said that on this occasion Saul knew him not, but asked whose son he was. Saul must have had an exceeding bad memory, or else the historian must have transposed or bungled in some way the regular events of his narrative. David for his bravery received promise from Saul of his daughter in marriage, but the latter being much chagrined at the applause bestowed by the women on David, resolved to exact such conditions for its fulfilment as would in all likelihood rid him altogether of his proposed son-in-law. He asks a *hundred foreskins* of the Philistines for his daughter's dowry—a strange request for a king to make. This our hero gallantly performed by bringing two hundred in full tale, so that instead of perishing in the undertaking, as Saul hoped, he returned with a new addi-

tion of glory. An open rupture now took place between the reigning king and the king expectant; David fled and collected together a band of vagrants and malcontents. With these he wandered up and down the country levying *black mail* on the country people; sending occasionally young men for provisions with polite messages to those whom they were about to lay under contribution, which messages, if not successful, were accompanied with threats that if the demands were refused, they "would smite every one that pisseth against the wall" by next morning. At last David and his outlaws removed to Gath, the chief city of king Achish, where, after remaining for a short time, he had given to him the city of Ziklag. Here David and his adventurers did not allow their swords to rust in the scabbards. He often led them on plundering excursions, and killed without mercy man, woman, and child, leaving nothing alive but the cattle, which he took as booty. He was afraid lest the prisoners should discover his conduct to King Achish, and therefore he put all to the sword, both male and female. He pretended to the King of Gath that he was making inroads into his own country, when all the time he was massacring the ancient inhabitants of Palestine. Murder, robbery, and falsehood thus characterised "the man after God's own heart," in these proceedings. Such a man, in any nation of Europe, at the present day, would be seized and hanged or gibbeted. While living this predatory life, one affair, in which he signalled himself, is that of Nabal and his wife. Nabal was a rich man, to whom David sent his messengers, or provision-finders, begging, as usual, some assistance that way, but was repulsed by Nabal, who upbraided David with having shaken off his master's yoke, and declared he was not so imprudent as to give to strangers and vagabonds what his own servants required. David, enraged at this answer, ordered out four hundred of his band and put himself at their head, resolved *not to save a soul alive*, but to slay them all with the sword. Abigail, Nabal's wife, hearing of this, met him with a magnificent present; this mollified our hero, so that he received the present, and also "accepted her person." When Abigail returned home, she found Nabal in his cups, so did not think fit to inform him of what passed betwixt her and David that night, but next morning, by what she told him, and what he probably guessed, "his heart died within him as a stone," and ten days after he died, when Mrs Abigail became the bosom companion of the holy David. So unprincipled was this roving *cateran*, that he offered his services to fight under the banner of the king of Gath against the Israelites, in that unhappy war in which Saul and his sons perished; but the Philistine chiefs, having no confidence in him, induced Achish to have nothing to do with such a dangerous auxiliary; accordingly he was dismissed, though he was extremely concerned that he could not assist the uncircumcised Philistines

in destroying his own brethren, the people of God, the professors of the true religion. David wound up this affair by a barefaced piece of hypocrisy, for after the death of Saul and his sons in the battle, he pretended the deepest sorrow, and even composed an elegy for them.

After the death of Saul, David returned into Judea, and was proclaimed king by the tribe of Judah. He reigned over this tribe seven years and a half, when Ishbosheth, Saul's son, who had succeeded his father as king over the remaining tribes of Israel, was assassinated by two of his captains, when the whole of Israel fell into the hands of David. He reigned thirty years over all Israel, and during nearly the whole time was actively engaged in fighting. David, while a vagrant, used to subsist by robbery and murder on rather a small scale, but when raised to the regal dignity, he practised cruelty and massacre upon the wholesale plan, and by geometrical rules and mathematical precision. For it is said, II. Samuel chapter ii. and ver. 2 "And he smote Moab, and measured them with a line, casting them down to the ground: even with two lines, measured he to put to death, and with one full line to keep alive; and so the Moabites became David's servants and brought gifts." Who could refuse gifts after the employment of such persuasive means as these. Idumea met with rougher usage, for there he ordered all the males to be slain; I. Kings, chap. xi. v. 15, "Six months did Joab remain there with all Israel, until he had cut off every male in Edom." When this pattern of the Deity took Rabbah a city of Ammon, he subjected them to the torture, in the following manner:—II. Samuel, chap. xii. v. 31, "And he brought forth the people that were in Rabbah, *(and put them under saws and under harrows of iron, and under axes of iron, and made them pass through the brick pillar;)* and thus did he unto all the cities of the children of Ammon." These are a few of the eut-throating exploits of this royal murderer; many others might be quoted, but these must be quite sufficient to expose the cheat of the clerical jugglers, who would palm upon the public, this Jewish impostor and exterminator, as a man of virtue, worthy of respect and imitation. In the case of Uriah and his wife, David was both an adulterer and a murderer. On another occasion, the bringing of the ark to Jerusalem; so void was he of any sense of common decency, that he exposed his person, and danced and capered like a madman all the way. Michael, one of his wives was so ashamed of his proceedings that she said, II. Samuel, chap. vi. "Vain-glorious was the King of Israel to-day, who *uncovered himself* in the eyes of the handmaids of his servants, *as one of the vain fellows shamelessly uncovereth himself.*" These last words of the text seem to intimate that David stripped himself stark-naked; or at least so naked as to expose his person in a scandalous manner. The only answer given by him to Michael's reproof was that he would be more vile than thus, and base in

his sight—What a beautiful picture of *true religion, piety, and decency.*

As rotten branches might be expected from a corrupt tree, so was it found in the case of David's family. Absalom conspired against his father—stirred up a regular rebellion, and, to make the breach as wide as possible, lay with ten of David's concubines, in the sight of everybody. Amnon, the oldest son, ravished his sister, and was killed by one of his brothers (Absalom) for that incest, and yet the author of this fratricide lay with the concubines of his father. What a dutiful and virtuous family! When old age overtook David, and he could not be warmed by all the clothes they covered him with, a young virgin was got to lie with him, and take care of him. She was the most beautiful girl that could be found. This was not the action of a very chaste man. Would a man of good morals and pure mind consent to such remedies as these? Most assuredly not.

David's conduct to Mephibosheth was most unjust. He took away his property through the false representations of Zibah, a servant of Mephibosheth, to whom it was given; and though afterwards David detected the treachery of Zibah, he only restored to Mephibosheth one half of his property, leaving the traitor in secure possession of the other half. Even when dying, the ruling passion of David is clearly exhibited, for he enjoins Solomon, his son and successor, to cut off some parties that had given former offence, but whom he had sworn to let live; as, for instance, Shemei, and Joab, his captain of the host. The last article of his will was, to shed the blood even of these he had solemnly sworn not to molest. As he lived so he died—a man of treachery, cruelty, and blood.

David was the author of many godly ballads and songs, some of which discover the character of the author very plainly. The 69th psalm is an excellent model of holy cursing; while the 38th most pathetically describes the nature of that disorder, which sometimes proves a disagreeable alloy to the loves of the saints. The elect, however, take this lament for a divine allegory on the spiritual distemper of souls, instead of the pain of a syphilitic ulcer, so accommodating is the church in its interpretations of "holy writ."

SOLOMON,

As soon as he got power, put into execution the vindictive requests of his dying father, with the addition of putting to death his brother, Adonijah. After this, he appears to have spent his time principally among the woman of his seraglio, of which he had the extraordinary number of 1000—300 wives and 700 concubines. In old age he became an idolator, to please one of his damsels, and at last died, worn out with amorous intrigues. In his dotage he declared that all "was vanity and vexation of spirit;" and well he might, after such experience.

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INTERNAL EVIDENCES OF CHRISTIANITY.

"THE Bible," we are told by certain manufacturers of popular information, "is the most remarkable book in existence, and that '*no production whatever* has any pretension to rival it in dignity of composition, or the important nature of the subjects treated of in its pages.'" We happen to be of those who differ widely from this writer, and who look upon the book to be only remarkable, as a gigantic combination of error and cruelty, and much inferior in "dignity of composition," and in the importance "of the subjects treated," to thousands of other books in existence. People are, no doubt, apt to judge through the media in which circumstances have placed them, and to differ in their estimate of the importance of things, as education or interest may direct. Hence Christians, who have founded their religion on the Bible, represent that book as a work of the highest importance. Mahometans, viewing the Koran in the same light, consider it as the holiest of books. While Free-thinkers look upon both as very erroneous and mischievous compositions, and the source of much fanaticism and persecution in the world.

In the language of the party already referred to, "the Bible comprehends the religious belief of the Jews and Christians," both the Old and New Testament, being essential for the faith of Christians; and as the evidences upon which the authenticity and credibility of the Bible depend, are those which settle the truth or falsehood of the Christian religion, or rather, those multifarious creeds which distract the world under that name, in disposing of the former, we settle the whole question, respecting the truth of the latter. It is our intention in the present treatise to enter into the internal evidences alone, leaving the external evidences for another article; and in our criticism upon the book, we shall calmly and dispassionately apply every argument. In the former treatises we have disposed of the accounts given of the Creation and the Universal Deluge, which is, at least, some make weight in our favour in beginning the present argument. We shall, therefore, leaving those topics out of consideration, pass on to a general review of the remaining internal evidences, grouping together, into a connected series, all the important links of the chain of argument—in doing which we shall begin with

the AUTHENTICITY, GENUINENESS, AND CREDIBILITY OF THE BOOKS WHICH COMPOSE THE OLD TESTAMENT.

The first five books of the Bible—*Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy*—are called the Books of Moses, though by what right of authorship, appears quite incomprehensible; for it can be easily shown, Moses could have no more to do with the writings of these books, than that he had to do with the discovery of gravitation, or the steam-engine. In the first place, there is no affirmative evidence that Moses is the author of these books. The style of writing is opposed to that conclusion, for it is always *the Lord said unto Moses, or Moses said unto the Lord, or Moses said unto the people, or the people said unto Moses*—the style of a neutral writer, in speaking of the persons whose lives and actions they are writing. But, granting that Moses might write in the third person, it cannot be supposed that Moses wrote the following passage without rendering himself truly ridiculous, and the very opposite of the character given: NUMBERS xii. 3.—"*Now the man, Moses, was very meek above all the men which were on the face of the earth.*" Instead of this proving meekness, it would exhibit Moses as a very conceited and arrogant person.

In Deuteronomy the style and manner of writing marks more evidently that Moses could not be the writer. The manner used is dramatical. The writer, after opening the subject by a short dramatic discourse, introduces Moses as in the act of speaking; and when he has made Moses finish his harangue, the writer resumes his own part, and speaks until he brings Moses forward again; and finally, the book ends with an account of the death, funeral, and character of Moses—circumstances which it cannot be presumed Moses could describe. The writer says, "And no man knoweth where the sepulchre of Moses is unto this day, evidently referring to a much later period to that of Moses, when the passage was written.

The 36th chapter of Genesis gives a genealogy of the sons and descendants of Esau, who are called Edomites, and also a list, by name, of the Kings of Edom: in the enumerating of which, it is said, verse 36—"And these are the kings that reigned in Edom before there reigned any king

over the children of Israel." This passage could only have been written after the first king began to reign over Israel, and, consequently, the book of Genesis, so far from being written by Moses, could not have been written till the time of Saul at least, or, in all likelihood, a long time after. Again we have another passage of a similar character in Genesis, chapter xii verse 6—"And the Canaanite was then in the land." This implies another period, when the Canaanite was not in the land; now, we learn from another portion of the Bible, the former did not happen till after David, therefore this passage could not be written by Moses.

Many other passages of a similar kind could be selected, to show, in addition to those already quoted, the impossibility of Moses being the author of the books ascribed to him; and if so, the Pentateuch is reduced to an anonymous series of fables, monstrous crimes, traditions, and cruelties, of which nothing is definitely known as to who was their author, or where and at what time they were written. The book of Joshua is in the same predicament, being without a legitimate father, unless we are to suppose that this sanguinary Jewish leader could write all the particulars of his death and burial, as given in the last chapter, or, could declare in the 24th chapter, verse 31—"And Israel served the Lord all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders that overlived Joshua."

Again, in enumerating the several exploits of Joshua, and of the places taken or attacked, it is said, chapter xv. verse 63—"As for the Jebusites, the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the children of Judah could not drive them out; but the Jebusites dwell with the children of Judah at Jerusalem unto this day." Now, the City of Jerusalem was not taken till the time of David, and consequently the book of Joshua could not be written before that period. The account of the taking of Jerusalem is given in II. Samuel, chapter v. verse 4, and also in I. Chronicles, xiv. verse 4. There is no other account in the Bible of the taking of Jerusalem. In Judges, chapter i. verse 8, we have a passage of similar import respecting the taking of Jerusalem, consequently this book, as well as the book of Joshua, could not be written till after the time of David. These books bear all the marks of being the productions of parties at a very late period of time, and to have suffered great interpolations, Joshua is evidently a continuation of Deuteronomy, Judges of Joshua, and so on.

Having shewn that the books of the Bible from Genesis to Judges are without authenticity as to authorship or date, we pass on to the book of Ruth, a story about a rustic girl creeping to her cousin's bed. To charge the Lord with the inspiration of such a story is anything but creditable. It appears, however, Ruth made a tolerable good bargain out of this going to bed affair, and with her success the book finishes. Unlike the previous compilations, it does not pretend to tell its author's name. Following this we have two historical books said

to be written by Samuel, though the most of the events described took place after Samuel's death. The account of the death and burial of Samuel is related in the 25th chapter of the first book of Samuel; the remaining portion of the book, and the whole of the second book of Samuel, is taken up principally with the reign of Saul's successor, David, the end of whose reign is, according to the Bible chronology, forty-three years after the death of Samuel. The two books of Samuel must therefore take the same place as anonymous compilations with the other books that have been reviewed.

The two books of Kings, besides giving the finish of David's history, and the life of his licentious son, give an abstract of the lives of seventeen Kings, and one Queen, who were Kings of Judah, and of nineteen Kings of Israel. The Jewish nation, on the death of Solomon, being split into two parties, who chose separate Kings, and who carried on the most bitter wars against each other. Assassinations and treacheries make up the leading features of their lives; and as for who wrote the books, or where and when they were wrote, no one can tell, for, the two books of Kings, unlike their predecessors, do not carry a lie on their titles respecting their authorship. The books of Chronicles are a repetition of the same cruelties; the history, however, being more broken and obscure, the compiler leaving out the reign of some of the kings, and by frequent transitions from kings of Judah to kings of Israel, and from kings of Israel to kings of Judah, rendering the narrative exceedingly confused. The books of Chronicles could not be written until at least 860 years after Moses; for, in 1st Chronicles, chap. iii. verse 13, in giving the genealogy of David, the writer mentions Hezekiah, and as it was in the reign of Zedekiah that Nebuchadnezzar conquered Jerusalem, according to Bible chronology, this was 860 after Moses. It would appear also that the writer of the book of Ezra had some thing to do in getting up the books of Chronicles, for the three last verses of the last chapter of 2d Chronicles, and the three first verses of the first chapter of Ezra, are almost word for word alike. And as Ezra is said to have written after the Babylonian captivity, Chronicles could not have existed before that time. The books of Ezra and Nehemiah are mere accounts of the return of the Jews and the rebuilding of Jerusalem, and may have been written by those whose names they bear, as far as the internal contents will warrant the supposition. The book of Esther has no author's name affixed to it, and seems to have but little connexion with the other books of which it forms a part, and is anything but a decent or edifying story. The books which follow (inasmuch as they are not historical, but collections of proverbs, prophecies, and songs, wherein a knowledge of the writer is not necessary to establish their value and credibility as books of reference as in matters of history,) we shall not notice at present, but leave them to their proper place in the next stage of our investigation.

INTERNAL EVIDENCES OF CHRISTIANITY.

We conclude this review of the Genuineness and Authenticity of the Historical Books of the Old Testament, by an extract from Dr Francis' Reply to Bishop Watson. "It was believed (says the Doctor) by all the best informed old fathers of the church, that the Jewish books had been absolutely lost during the Captivity, and that Esdras has written them from inspiration, or that he collected the Pentateuch, and all other canonical books, out of whatever records he could find, and put them together.* In either case their authority is greatly invalidated; and the more so, as the fourth book of Esdras, adopted by the Greek Church, and generally deemed authentic, says expressly, that Esdras dictated the holy books, during forty successive days, to five scribes, who were continually writing. This tale shows sufficiently the general belief that he was the restorer of the long lost books of the law. In the second book of Nehemiah, or properly speaking, Esdras, it is said, Ezra, or Esdras, the scribe, who was above all the people, brought the book of the law to the people, and then the people rejoiced much, in being instructed in the law of God—that when they found there the commandment of the Lord, ordering the Jews to perform the feast of the booths, there was great gladness, "and all the congregation of them that were come again out of the Captivity, made booths, and sat under booths; for *since the days of Joshua, the son of Nun, unto that day, had not the children of Israel done so.*" If the Jews had even forgotten a feast, the memory of which every father would transmit to his son, is not this an evident proof that they had no books in the Captivity? Again, in chapter vii. of the first book of Esdras, it is said that Esdras 'had very great skill, so that he omitted nothing of the law and commandments of the Lord, but taught all Israel the ordinances and judgments.' Can any man, after this, doubt that Esdras was the compiler of all the books which the Jews had not known for many centuries? It is further stated in 2d Chronicles, chapter xxiv. verse 15, that Hilkiiah, the priest, found a book of the law of God given by Moses, and sent by Shaphan to King Josiah, who heard it read, which shows it must have been very short; and, by the context, it would appear to have been the law strictly speaking—another proof that these records were altogether scattered, and are all without authority, since it was so easy to forge among a people who seemed to preserve no more than a traditional law. Again, although in the older Jewish books, such as Kings and Chronicles, we find the name of Moses often mentioned, yet no word answering to the five books of the Pentateuch is found. The code of laws of Moses seem to have been forgotten; for Solomon ornamented the Temple with calves, in express contempt of that law, and this while he was the favourite of God, and the wisest man in the world. The very confusion which pervades

the books ascribed to Moses, shows them to have been compilations. Jerome, who was one of the most learned of the fathers, confesses that he dare not affirm that Moses is the author of the Pentateuch. He even adds, that he has no objection to allow, that Esdras wrote the books in question."* Our next inquiry is into the truth of the contents of these books, leaving out of view their authorship and want of method or arrangement. Are the events which they describe, of such a nature as to command belief? Are their statements consistent with each other, and in agreement with the principles of sound morality, and the dictates of humanity? To answer these questions satisfactorily, shall be our next endeavour.

The book of Genesis, after narrating the untenable and contradictory accounts of the creation and the fall of man, and the absurdities of the flood, and Noah's floating menagerie, next regales us with another tale still more monstrous and absurd, were that possible, viz.—the building of the Tower of Babel, and the confounding of tongues. The eleventh chapter of Genesis begins thus, "The whole earth was of one language and of one speech. And it came to pass, as they journeyed from the east, that they found a plain in the land of Shinar; and they dwelt there. And they said one to another, Go to, let us make brick and burn them thoroughly; and they had brick for stone, and slime had they for mortar. And they said, Go to, let us build us a city, and a tower, whose top may reach unto heaven; and let us make us a name, lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth. And the Lord came down to see the city, and the tower which the children of men builded; and the Lord said, Behold the people is one, and they have all one language, and thisthey begin to do, and now nothing will be restrained from them which they have imagined to do. Goto, let us go down and there confound their language, that they may not understand one another's speech. So the Lord scattered them abroad from thence upon the face of all the earth, and they left off to build the city." This story is what would be called in common language a bare-faced falsehood. The project of building a tower whose top should reach to heaven is so utterly foolish that it is impossible how any people could ever entertain such a notion; and to represent the Lord as jealous of their getting into heaven by any such means, is the height of profanity, as well as nonsense. Such an absurd fable, to explain the diversity of language, could only be expected from an ignorant and barbarous people, who imagined the sky a sort of glass roof, a mile or two up, through whose "windows" they could easily creep into the celestial regions, if they only built a tower high enough. This is a strange affair to dignify with "the Word of God." But this is only one of a thousand unnatural and ab-

* Bellarmine de Script. Ecclesiast. page 22.

* Hieronim, Tom. iv. page 134, Third Edit. Paris, 1706.

surd representations which intersperse the Bible throughout, such as the Lord walking in a garden—dwelling in a bush—wrestling with Jacob—speaking out of a pillar of fire to his conjuror and man of all work, Moses—living in a box of shittim-wood, or dining on veal cutlets at Abraham's table. Such representations of Deity are truly degrading. But cruelty, hatred, and revenge are added to this localised human figure of God; for he commands that the sons be punished even at times, for the sins or omissions of their parents, Genesis, chap. xvii. verse 14. And in Deuteronomy, chap. xx. verse 16, he orders, through Moses, a general massacre, for result of which, see the murder of the Midianites, in Numbers, chapter xxxi. in which a minute description is given of the Jewish army returning from one of its plundering and butchering excursions. It goes on, in verse 13, to say—"And Moses, and Eleazar the priest, and all the princes of the congregation, went forth to meet them without the camp. And Moses was wroth with the officers of the host—with the captains over thousands, and captains over hundreds, which came from the battle. And Moses said unto them, *Have ye saved all the women alive?* Behold, these caused the children of Israel, through the counsel of Balaam, to commit trespasses against the Lord in the matter of Peor, and there was a plague among the congregation of the Lord. Now, therefore, *kill every male among the little ones, and kill every woman that hath known man, by lying with him: but all the women children that have not known a man, by lying with him, keep alive for yourselves.*" The history of the human race, with all its murders and massacres, cannot produce a parallel to this in atrocity. Here an order is given to butcher the boys—massacre the mothers; and, for any proof to the contrary, to debauch the daughters. Any religion that could sanction such villany, must be a false and execrable religion. But further on we have a splendid specimen of priestly greed added to the previous crimes, in dividing the spoil, verse 37—"And the *Lord's tribute* of the sheep was six hundred and three score and ten; and the beeves were thirty and six thousand, of which the *Lord's tribute* was three score and twelve; and the asses were thirty thousand, of which the *Lord's tribute* was three score and one; and the persons were thirty thousand, of which the *Lord's tribute* was thirty-two."

In addition to public massacre, the Lord recommends secret assassinations, Judges, chap. iii. v. 15 to 22, and approves it, Judges, chap. v. ver. 24, 25, 26. He enjoins deceit, or rather swindling, Exodus, chap. xii. v. 35, 36; employs a lying spirit, 2 Chronicles, xviii. v. 20, 21, 22; rewards lying, Genesis, chap. xxvii. v. 19, and chap. xxviii. v. 13, 14, 15; protects hypocrisy and punishes integrity, Genesis, chap. xx. v. 1 to 18. He dictates a law, Deuteronomy chap. xxii. v. 13 to 21, in which is exhibited the most outrageous disregard of common decency, and utter disregard of

physiological facts; a law so revolting to any one but a jealous savage, that at the present time it is no where to be found, except among a few of the Tartar hordes, or in some of the rudest provinces in the distant interior of Russia. The writer of Joshua, in ignorance of the simplest principles of astronomy, orders the sun and the moon to stand still. There are plenty of other cruelties, absurdities, and unnaturalisms thickly strewn throughout the whole of the Old Testament. Can any thing be more opposed to common decency and morality than Lot's daughters filling their father drunk, that he may lie with them and get them with child; or the transaction of Onan, and the intrigue of Judah and Tamar? The character of Moses is as bad as can well be imagined. He was the prime mover in all the wars and massacres from the leaving of Egypt to the reaching the "Promised Land." Under the sanction of religion there is not a crime to which he was not the instigator, or an absurdity which he did not countenance. The character of Joshua is of a similar stamp, only with less of the trickery of religious imposture. He was a "man of war," whose business it was to exterminate, and well did he execute his mission; killing in the city of Jericho "man and woman, young and old, and ox, and sheep, and ass," and burning the city with fire, saving only the family of a harlot, who was base enough to betray the place. Throughout the career of Joshua, the same blood-thirsty and exterminating spirit is manifested as in the above illustration. "No quarter seems to have been the universal motto of "God's chosen people." See further the book of Judges about delivering the Canaanites and Perizzites into the hand of Judah, in which the latter "slew of them in Bezek a thousand men. But Adoni-bezek fled, and they pursued after him and caught him, and cut off his thumbs and great toes."† It is also stated in the nineteenth verse of the same chapter, "The Lord was with Judah, and he drove out the inhabitants of the mountain, but could not drive out the inhabitants of the valley!" Why? "Because they had chariots of iron!" So much for the power of the "God of Israel." Judges contains, in addition, the account of a most unnatural assault upon a traveller and his concubine, in Gibeah, a city of Benjamin. It is in good keeping with the whole book. The virtuous men of Gibeah having threatened committing an unnatural offence upon the traveller, are appeased by the substitution of his concubine, whom "they abuse until morning," so that she dies in consequence, and is cut up by her owner in pieces, and sent through all the land of Israel. The children of Benjamin take part with the Sodomites and ravishers of Gibeah, and a war of extermination is the result between the two divisions of the "chosen people." The children of Benjamin are defeated, and, as usual with the vanquished party, all their wives and children are put to death; six

* Joshua, chap. vi. v. 21. † Judges, chap. i. v. 4.

hundred men only escaping into the wilderness. The Israelites having sworn not to give their daughters to the Benjamites, and the inhabitants of Jabesh Gilead not having come up to Mizpeh, this is made the pretence for a second butchery; twelve thousand of the most valiant men are commanded, saying, "Go and smite the inhabitants of Jabesh Gilead with the edge of the sword, *with the women and children*: utterly destroy every male, and every woman that hath lain by man;" but having found four hundred young virgins, "that had known no man by lying with any male," they gave them to the sons of Benjamin, "and yet so they sufficed them not." So, as they had sworn not to give them wives of their own daughters, "therefore they commanded the children of Benjamin, saying, Go and lie in wait in the vineyards, and see and behold if the daughters of Shiloh come out to dance in dances, then come ye out of the vineyards, and catch ye every man his wife." Verily the chosen people reflect but little credit on the discrimination of the Lord in making such a selection.

We have already characterised *Ruth* as an idle foolish story, free, however, from the cruelties which disfigure the other books. But if so, this deficiency is amply made up in the succeeding ones. We have in the books of Samuel cruelties enough. Saul is dethroned because he did not destroy every thing that had life belonging to the Amalekites, and was humane enough not to hew Agag to pieces, a job which the unfeeling priest Samuel accomplishes in the true butcher style. A man of blood is appointed in his place, who, from being a shepherd, becomes a leader of banditti, living on the mountains, and subsisting upon plunder, as a preparatory step to his exercise of kingly power;—a man who combined treachery with cruelty in his intercourse with Achish, king of Gath—who put the miserable inhabitants of Rabbah under saws, axes, and harrows of iron, and made them pass through the brick kiln; who, after debauching one of his captain's wives, adds murder to adultery, by having the injured husband put to death; and who, after a life of villany and blood, dies exhibiting the spirit of a fiend, by ordering his son and successor, Solomon, to put Shemei to death, though he had previously sworn to respect his life; and, at the same time, commands the death of his principal captain, Joab. And this was a man according to "God's own heart." Should we judge the Deity by this example afforded, we should imagine him a blood-thirsty demon, instead of a God of mercy and love. But the Old Testament throughout breathes the same sanguinary spirit. Solomon, besides being an effeminate debauchee, having more wives, and concubines that would satisfy a thousand ordinary men, was an idolater, and the slayer of his own brother Adonijah. Scarcely half the kings died a natural death: some only reigning a few years, and others only a few months before being cut off by assassination or in warfare. In the tenth chap-

ter of 2nd Kings an account is given of two baskets full of children's heads, seventy in number, being exposed at the entrance of the city; they were the children of Ahab, and were murdered by the orders of Jehu, whom Elisha, the pretended man of God, had anointed to be king over Israel, on purpose to commit this bloody deed, and to assassinate his predecessor. And in 2nd Kings, c. xv. v. 16, it is said that Mahanaim smote the city of Tipzah, because they opened not the city to him, and *all the women therein that were with child he ripped up*. The books of Chronicles are but repetitions of the same crimes. Will any one, after these examples, say that such a nation of cut-throats were God's "select people," and that the book which commands and describes their atrocities is the "word of God?"

Nor is the evidence of credibility and inspiration much better shown in the singing and prophecy books of the Old Testament. The Song of Solomon is just such a production as might be expected from a man with a thousand wives, full of indecent allusions, and licentious similes and metaphors, in which the obtuse or accommodating spirit of modern divinity can see nothing but pictures of Christ and the Church, though more likely to refer to some of Solomon's thousand wives. The wisdom of Solomon is on a par, in many parts, with the purity of his allusions; for instance, in his Proverbs we have the following sublime passages:—"The horse leech hath two daughters crying give, give: there are three things that are never satisfied, yea four things say not, it is enough: the grave, and the barren womb, the earth that is not filled with water, and the fire that saith not it is enough." "There be three things that go well; a grey-hound, a he-goat, and a king." "It is the glory of God to conceal a thing, but the honour of kings is to search out a matter." "A whore is a deep ditch, and a strange woman is a narrow pit." Shades of Socrates, Plato, Pythagoras, and Epicurus, after this hide your diminished heads before the wisdom of Israel's king. The Psalms are principally made up of curses and invective, being a collection of different writers, like a song-book of the present day, some of which, from internal evidence, could not be written before the Babylonian captivity: as, for instance, the 137th psalm. David could only be one out of a number of writers; and those ascribed to him, like his character, are anything but of a moral or charitable nature: he is always calling on the Lord to rise and scatter his enemies. Ecclesiastes, or the Preacher, are the solitary reflections of a worn-out debauchee, who cries out, after a licentious life, "all is vanity and vexation of spirit." And no wonder, if Solomon, as is said, was the author; for a person after having worn himself out with seven hundred wives and three hundred concubines, might well cry out in this manner when he got to be an old man. It reflects little, however, upon his wisdom and philosophy to have spent his life in licentiousness, and exclaim thus in a fit of

melancholy, when he was unfit for anything else.

The books of the Prophets fill up the remaining portion of the Old Testament, and, as we intend to write a treatise on the Prophecies alone, we shall be exceedingly brief in our remarks upon them at present. Of the sixteen prophets, whose prophecies are given, though they all lived within the times the books of Kings and Chronicles pretend to record, only two are mentioned—Isaiah and Jeremiah; thus proving they must have been but obscure, unimportant poets, or song-makers to be thus slightly passed by. It does not appear either that these prophecies were written by those whose names they bear, but rather were collected together at some late period. The want of method and arrangement warrant this supposition. For instance, Isaiah could not have written the latter part of the 45th chap. which speaks of Cyrus, referring to a period at least 150 years after the death of Isaiah. Every part of this book is twisted and tortured by Priestcraft, to suit the mission of Jesus Christ, though it can be easily shown all such prophecies could be made to apply to hundreds of other events. Their incoherent and indefinite character, leave ample room for the play of the imagination in applying them, and hence, while the Christians see nothing but Christ and the Church in them, the Jews, who ought, at least to know as much about the matter, see nothing of the sort. The prophecies of Jeremiah are still less to be trusted. He was, to all appearance, a traitor in the interest of Nebuchadnezzar; everything shows him to have been a man of doubtful character, always taking care in his prognostications to leave him a door to escape by, should the prediction fail to come to pass. As a specimen of the consistency of Jeremiah's prophesying, take the following, which contains a palpable contradiction: In speaking of King Zedekiah, Jeremiah chap. xxxiv. v. 2, "Thus saith the Lord—Behold I will give this city into the hands of the King of Babylon, and will burn it with fire, *and thou shalt surely be taken, and delivered into his hand, and thine eyes shall behold the eyes of the King of Babylon, and he shall speak with thee mouth to mouth, and thou shalt go to Babylon.* Yet, *hear the word of the Lord; O, Zedekiah! King of Judah, thus saith the Lord—Thou shalt not die by the sword, but thou shalt die in peace;* and with the burnings of thy fathers, the former kings that were before thee, so shall they burn odours for thee, and will lament thee, saying, ah, Lord! for I have pronounced the word, saith the Lord."

Instead of Zedekiah beholding the eyes of the King of Babylon and speaking with him mouth to mouth, and dying in peace, and with the burning of odours as at the funeral of his fathers, the reverse according to the 52 chapter, is the case. It is there said, verse 10, that "the king of Babylon slew the sons of Zedekiah before his eyes; *then he put out the eyes of Zedekiah and bound him in chains, and carried him to Babylon, and put him*

in prison till the day of his death." So much for the veracity of Isaiah and Jeremiah. These being the only two of the sixteen prophets mentioned in the historical books, are considered to be the most important; and if we convict them of any glaring inaccuracies, it must go a great way as presumptive evidence against the others. In Ezekiel, chap. iv. we are treated with a particular account of Ezekiel being commanded by the Lord to dine upon bread made up with human dung; a dose, however against which the stomach of the prophet revolts, and he gets off by using cow dung instead. In chapter xxiii. there is given the obscene whoredoms of Aholah and Aholibah, as types of Samaria and Jerusalem; both instances showing a filthiness of illustration out of many others that might be quoted, fatal to the credibility of any book calling itself the word of God. Passing over the smaller Prophets—Jonah and the whale, Daniel and his den of lions, &c.; the value of which we leave to be discussed in the forthcoming article on prophecy, and having, we think, done something to weaken the credibility of these principal prophets, Isaiah, Jeremiah and Ezekiel, we shall devote the remainder of the article to an examination into the internal evidences of the GENUINENESS, AUTHENTICITY, AND CREDIBILITY OF THE BOOKS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT.

The four Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles, are the historical portions of the New Testament, the rest being entirely doctrinal. The Books of the four Evangelists, purport to be a record of the sayings and doings of Jesus Christ, the founder of the Christian religion. Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John are the reputed authors. Matthew and John are said to have been the disciples of Jesus Christ, but this is no proof that they wrote the books which bear their names. Of Mark and Luke it is not even pretended that they were disciples, nor is it certain who they were; consequently, their account of the actions and sayings of Christ must have been collected from others at second hand; for these men did not propose to write by inspiration, this was invented and ascribed to them in latter times. Thus we have only Matthew and John to attest the truth of these wonderful events, even if they did write the books ascribed to them, which is extremely doubtful.

The first subject presented to us in Matthew, is the genealogy of Christ. Luke gives another genealogy of the same person, which is quite different both in the names given and in the number of the generations. Next, Matthew informs us that after Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found to be with child by the Holy Ghost. And how is this found out? By an angel, it is said, appearing to Joseph in a dream. We are sure that were any young woman now-a-days to charge the Holy Ghost, or any other ghost, with getting her with child, and call in her simple-minded sweet-heart to swear he dreamt it, who might be induced to do so from a

INTERNAL EVIDENCES OF CHRISTIANITY.

desire of concealing her disgrace and his own participation in the same, both of them would be scouted as imposters; and any person who might publish the affair as a matter of truth, would be set down as an ignorant fanatical simpleton, or else a cunning knave desirous of passing a cheat on the multitude. Matthew says that Joseph having found Mary with child before marriage wanted to put her away privately, until the angel set him right in the matter. The story would have been a little more seemly if the angel had appeared to him when awake, instead of when asleep. Dreams are an exceedingly suspicious kind of evidence, and however satisfactory to Joseph and his historian, Matthew, would be rejected as proof of the simplest event at the present day. Matthew tells us that when Christ was born in Bethlehem,* wise men from the East came to worship him. Neither of the other three Evangelists mention this circumstance, though Luke, who is very particular in his narrative, says† that it was shepherds from the neighbourhood. Matthew tells us they were led by a star; Luke says they were directed by an angel. Mark and John seem to know nothing at all about the event. Matthew says that Herod being mocked by the wise men,‡ destroyed all the young children in Bethlehem, and the coasts thereof, from two years old and under. Luke never mentions this horrible massacre, neither does Mark or John; and Josephus, who relates all Herod's transactions, and was no friend of the latter, is silent on this important point.

From the time that Jesus was presented in the temple, until he was baptised by John, when nearly thirty years of age, we hear of him only once,|| when he was about twelve years old, going up with his parents to Jerusalem to the Passover, and staying behind to dispute with some doctors. It is only after his baptism that he makes his regular debut, and his first adventure is with the Devil in the wilderness. The Devil is represented making a regular attack upon Jesus, first commanding him, in a kind of taunt, if he was the Son of God, to make stones into bread;§ second, putting him on a pinnacle of the temple,¶ and bidding him cast himself down; and third, taking him up to an exceeding high mountain and showing him *all the kingdoms of the earth, and the glory of them, in a moment of time*. A passage notoriously false, and showing the extreme ignorance of the writer respecting the figure of the globe.

If we examine the Evangelists with care, we will find a contradiction in almost every thing they relate. We have an instance in which they report the calling of Simon Peter and Andrew. Matthew and Mark tell us that Jesus was walking by the sea of Galilee, and Simon Peter and Andrew were

in their ships fishing when he called them. But Luke says* *he was sitting in their ship*, and teaching the people on the land, and the fishermen were out washing their nets. Matthew and Mark inform that when Jesus called them they immediately left their nets and followed him; but, according to Luke's story, it does not appear that he calls them at all; they followed him in consequence of a great draught of fishes which were taken by his directions after his sermon was over. Matthew relates† that when Jesus entered into Capernaum, a Centurion *came to him* beseeching him to come and heal his servant; but, according to Luke,‡ the Centurion *only sent* for him to come, but would not go himself, because he did not think himself worthy. Which of the accounts are true?

After healing the centurion's servant, Matthew conducts Jesus to Peter's house, where he healed his wife's mother of a fever, and next day crossed the lake to the other side, and drowned a herd of swine; whereas, according to Luke, the next day he was at Nain, where he brought to life a young man that was dead, a miracle that the other Evangelists seem not to have heard of, for they never mention it, though Luke says|| it was rumoured throughout the whole country. The account of the legion of devils that were dispossessed and sent into the herd of swine is, like the rest of the stories, extremely discordant. Matthew relates that it was in the country of Gergesenes; Mark and Luke say it was in the country of the Gadarenes. Matthew reports that there were two men who met Jesus possessed with devils; but, according to Mark and Luke, only one. This story suggests another reflection—is it probable that such a herd of swine would be kept in a country where swine were declared unclean by the law, and held as an abomination? or was it just admitting the existence of the large herd of swine, thus to drown other people's property, and, perhaps, ruin them? Could not the devils have been cast out without doing so much mischief?

Matthew describes Christ's visit to the house of Simon the leper at Bethany, where we are told a woman came and anointed him as he sat at meat. Matthew§ and Mark¶ says this was done two days before the last Passover, at which he was betrayed; but John says it was six days before it. According to Luke, it was more than two years before it, near the beginning of his ministry. Matthew and Mark relate that this was done in the house of Simon the leper; according to Luke it was in the house of a Pharisee; but John says it was in the house of Lazarus, and that it was his sister Mary that anointed him. Matthew and Mark tell us that the woman poured the ointment on his head; but, according to Luke and John, it was on his feet, and, in a very singular manner,

* Matt. chap. ii. v. 2. † Luke, chap. ii. v. 8, 18.

‡ Matt. chap. ii. v. 16. || Luke, chap. ii. v. 42.

§ Matt. chap. iv. v. 3. ¶ Matt. chap. iv. v. 5,

* Luke, chap. v. ver. 3. † Matt. chap. viii. ver. v.

‡ Luke, chap. vii. v. 3, 7. || Luke, chap. vii. v. 17.

§ Matt. chap. xxvi. v. 7. ¶ Mark, chap. xiv. v. 3.

she bathed his feet with tears, and wiped them with her hair.*

Matthew relates,† that after Judas betrayed his Master, "he repented himself, and brought again the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders, saying, I have sinned in that I have betrayed the innocent blood; and they said—what is that to us?—see thou to that; and he cast down the pieces of silver and went and hanged himself." The Acts of the Apostles gives a widely different account. It states that Judas purchased a field with the money, and, "falling headlong, he burst asunder in the midst, and all his bowels gushed out."‡ In the former account the chief priests are said to have bought the Potter's Field to bury strangers in; the latter account makes Judas the purchaser.

In describing the crucifixion, according to Matthew, there was darkness over the land from the sixth to the ninth hour—that there was an earthquake—the rocks were rent, the graves opened, the bodies of saints rose and went into the holy city, and appeared to many.§ This opening of the graves and the resurrection of the saints is never hinted at by the other Evangelists. And John, in addition, says nothing whatever about the darkness or the rending of the veil of the temple.

We have another specimen of gospel accuracy in the inscription on the cross. It is given as follows by the four writers:—

Matthew—THIS IS JESUS, THE KING OF THE JEWS.

Mark—THE KING OF THE JEWS.

Luke—THIS IS THE KING OF THE JEWS.

John—JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE KING OF THE JEWS.

Matthew and Mark inform us both the thieves crucified with Christ reviled him; but Luke says it was only one, and that the other rebuked his companion, and said to Jesus, "Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom," and Jesus answered him, saying, "To-day shalt thou be with me in Paradise."

After the crucifixion follows the resurrection, in narrating which Matthew says|| that at the end of the Sabbath as it began to dawn, towards the first day of the week, came Mary Magdalene and the other Mary to see the sepulchre. Mark states that it was sun rising, and John says it was dark, and that Mary Magdalene came alone. Matthew goes on to describe in the same chapter a great earthquake, and an angel of the Lord coming and rolling back the stone of the sepulchre and making a stool of it; but the other three books say nothing of the earthquake—the rolling back of the stone by the angel, or his sitting on it. Mark says the angel was within the sepulchre sitting on the right side. Luke says there were two

and they were both standing up, and John says they were both sitting down, one at the head and the other at the foot, chap. xxviii. v. 1st.

The writer of the Book of Matthew relates that the angel that was sitting on the stone at the mouth of the sepulchre, said to the two Mary's "Behold Christ is gone before you into Galilee, there shall you see him, lo, I have told ye;" and immediately after, Christ himself is represented speaking to the same purpose to the women, who ran quickly to tell it to the disciples; and the 16th verse says, "Then the eleven disciples went away into Galilee, into a mountain where Jesus had appointed them; and when they saw him they worshipped him. But the writer of John makes Christ make his first appearance, the same evening, in a house where the doors were shut; while Luke says pointedly in opposition to Matthew, the meeting was in Jerusalem, the evening of the day of the resurrection.

Respecting the ascension, Matthew does not say a syllable about it, neither does John. The writer of the book of Mark passes over it in a slovenly careless manner with a single dash of the pen, as if he were tired of romancing. The account of Luke is not much better, yet even here they disagree respecting the place; for Mark describes the ascension at the meeting with the eleven as they sat at meat in Jerusalem. But Luke says the ascension was from Bethany.

We have given sufficient internal evidence to destroy the authenticity and credibility of any book, and much more so, one pretending to be the word of God. The Acts of the Apostles, are a record of the missionary excursions of Paul and his companions, when, or by whom written, nobody knows, and the remainder of the New Testament is a compilation of Epistles, said to be by Paul and other Apostles; but whether written by Paul and the other persons named, is a matter of indifference, as far as the primary question under discussion is concerned. Those epistles are doctrinal speculations of the writers, and it signifies nothing who wrote them. It is not upon the epistles, but upon what is called Gospel, contained in the books of the Evangelists, and upon the creation and the fall of man, and the pretended prophecies that Christianity is built. If these latter be untrue, the epistles, as dependent on them, must follow the same fate. That they are unworthy of credit we have already shown, by evidence sufficient to satisfy any reasonable mind. The epistles of Paul and his coadjutors, along with the morality of the Gospels, and the pretended miracles of Christ, will be fully discussed in forthcoming treatises on the morality of the Christian system, and on the subject of miracles. In the ensuing number, the external evidences of the Bible will be fully considered, when we hope to finish satisfactorily the good work which this number has commenced.

* Luke, c. vii. v. 36. † Matt. chap. xxvii. v. 3, 6.

‡ Acts, c. i. v. 18. § Matt. c. xxvii. v. 51-52-53,

|| Matt. chap. xxviii. verse 1.

FREE-THINKERS' INFORMATION FOR THE PEOPLE.

"LET ALL MEN HAVE FULL LIBERTY TO TEACH AND MAINTAIN WHATEVER OPINIONS THEY
MAY CHOOSE."—*Melancthon.*

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EXTERNAL EVIDENCES OF CHRISTIANITY.

HAVING disposed of the internal evidences against the genuineness, authenticity, and credibility of the books upon which the various systems of Christianity are based, we proceed to finish the subject by a summary and analysis of the external evidences adducible, towards settling this much controverted question, beginning with the "Jewish Revelation," or

BOOKS OF THE OLD TESTAMENT.

We have already shown from the construction of several passages, and by every other internal proof, that the Old Testament must have been written a long time after the events took place it professes to record; and that in all probability it is the work of the Jewish priests, at different periods, and collected together, for the first time, after the return from the Babylonian captivity. The silence of all external cotemporary writers goes far to confirm this view of the matter; for no one can be quoted that speaks of Moses and his wonderful performances; of Samson and the destructive jaw-bone of an ass; or of any other of the inhuman characters that figure in the pages of the Jewish records. No one quotes the books in which these things are recorded. The external world appears to have been entirely ignorant of the existence of the "chosen people," until their migrations into Alexandria in Egypt; and knew nothing of these sacred books until translated by the Jewish Rabbis into Greek, 287 years B.C., at the desire of Ptolemy Philadelphus, King of Egypt. It is also certain that no canon of the Scriptures existed among the Jews till the time of the Synagogue under the Maccabees. Prior to their reign there had never existed among the Jews any such Council; and if the word occurs in the Pentateuch it is chargeable on the transcribers and composers, who lived when there was a synagogue, and is to be understood only as a collection of priests. The events, therefore, mentioned in the Old Testament are entirely without corroborative evidence; the whole external world being silent respecting them; even the books that pretend to be their Chronicles are proved to be compilations, concocted hundreds of years after the time when such events are represented to have taken place.

As might be expected from this vagueness of evidence, the Jews were much divided respecting

the canon of their sacred books. The Pharisees of the Second Temple chose the books they thought best, out of a multitude of forgeries. The Talmud relates that the synagogues were about to reject the Book of Proverbs, Ezekiel's Prophecies, and Ecclesiastes, because they imagined these writings contradictory to the law of God; but a certain Rabbi having undertaken to reconcile them, they were preserved as canonical. The Samaritan Jews and the ancient Sadducees rejected all but the Pentateuch. A prodigious number of forged Books of Daniel, Esdras, and the Prophecies were at this time in circulation. It appears clear that no external authority can be cited in support of the genuineness, authenticity, and credibility of the Old Testament.

Nor have modern Christians agreed in their reception of the books of the Old Testament. The Canticles have been rejected by Whiston: and Eickhorn and Aiken designate Jonah and Daniel "legends and romances." The Catholics admit the Apocrypha, which is rejected by the Protestants; and ten entire books are excluded by the Swedenborgians. The language, also, in which the Old Testament is said to have been originally written, is another source of difficulty to the "true believer," and of strength to him who doubts. It is said by Bishop Marsh, that the Old Testament is the only work written in the ancient Hebrew language;—a language of which, while living, there never had been a lexicon or glossary composed; and Le Clerc and Bellamy declare that the learned merely *guess* at the sense, in an infinity of places, which produces a prodigious number of discordant interpretations; the language originally having no vowels to regulate precision of sound: the vowel points of the modern Hebrew text being comparatively a modern innovation.

To show how little we can depend on the correctness of any thing proceeding from such a source, and more especially any matter purporting to be the word of God, we give the following remarks on the Hebrew language from that popular and well written work, the Penny Cyclopaedia. The article from which the extract is made is under the head Hebrew:—

"The language in which the Pentateuch is written differs so little from that of David, Solo-

mon, and Isaiah, who lived many centuries after the time of Moses, that many critics supposing it impossible that a language should have remained stationary for so many centuries, have maintained that none of the books of the Old Testament were written previous to the time of David and Solomon. *It is not very easy to disprove this opinion.*

"It is a characteristic of the Hebrew language according to the system of most modern Hebrew grammars, that the alphabet consists only of consonants, and that the vowels are expressed by means of small points placed above and below the letters. The antiquity of these points has occasioned great controversy among the learned. Some have maintained that the points are as ancient as the letters, and that the points and letters were taught to Moses by God himself. Others maintain that the points were first introduced by Ezra, when he translated the Scriptures in the present square characters; others that the Hebrews had originally three vowel points, *a, i, and o*, and that the present system of punctuation was not introduced to the time of the Masorites, perhaps as early as the sixth or seventh century, and not later than the tenth or eleventh, (that is from twenty-two to twenty-six hundred years after the time of Moses, the pretended writer of the Pentateuch.) It appears certain, that the Hebrew letters were originally without points. . . . The ancient versions, such as the Chaldee paraphrases of Jonathan and Onkelos, &c., &c., and the Septuagint *must have been made from Hebrew manuscripts without points, since they frequently gave a different interpretation to the words from that which they must mean according to the present system of punctuation.*" After such a confession of the fallibility of the language which embodies the Jewish "divine revelation," who would put his trust in such a broken reed? Enough for the Jewish Scriptures, pass we on to the more important consideration of the truth of the events contained in the

BOOKS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT.

It is here the Scripture evidence manufacturers have exerted themselves to the utmost to make out a case; and in proportion to the importance which has been attached to the New Testament does it behoove us to examine into the external evidences advanced in its support. Christ is said to have been crucified when thirty-two years of age, and the earliest of the Gospels is said to have been written sixty-four years after the birth of Christ, and the other Gospels not long after. There is no evidence, however, in support of this position. It does not appear that any of the Gospels are mentioned by any one before Irenæus, A. D. 182. *Not one of the Apostolic Fathers, viz., Barnabas (about 71); Clemens Romanus (about 96); Hermas (about 100); St Ignatius (about 107); Polycarp (about 108); and Papias*

(about 116),—not one of these Fathers mention Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. Neither are they referred to by Justin Martyr (140); Tatian (172); nor Hegesippus (173.) Irenæus is the first who makes reference to the Gospels, or mentions the names of their reputed authors. Thus have we a blank of 140 years from the death of Christ up to the time of Irenæus, for which we have not a particle of evidence respecting the existence of, far less the truth contained within, the books of the New Testament. Beyond the end of the second century there exists an insuperable chasm through which it is impossible to carry on the chain of testimony to the supposed Apostolic age.

The important question as to the time when the present books of the New Testament were collected into one volume; as also, who were the authors of the collection is attended with considerable difficulty. During the second, third, and fourth centuries, about fifty other Gospels were in circulation, and quoted by various sects, as orthodox and credible histories; of which the Gospels of Peter, Andrew, and Barnabas, are examples. In addition, epistles and sacred books existed in abundance, filled with the most absurd and ridiculous stories; among which our sacred books floated about, uncollected and unstamped with the seal of canonization, and received or rejected according to the fancy or prejudices of the pious. At length our Gospels gradually acquired the ascendancy, while the former slowly fell into neglect.

The first catalogue made of the books of the New Testament, was by Origen, who died A. D. 253; but made solely on his own authority. This collection was afterwards sanctioned by St Athanasius, and finally adopted by the ruling party in the Church, at the council of Laodicea in 363; and this, says Paley, "was the first known authoritative declaration on the subject." Yet even this did not settle the question; for notwithstanding all the efforts of the predominant sect, the denounced Scriptures continued to be popular; and so late as the fifth century they were held in such regard even by the Catholics, that Pope Leo was obliged to issue a strict injunction for their suppression. According to Lardner, the canon had not been settled by any authority universally acknowledged in 556; but that Christians were at liberty to judge for themselves concerning the genuineness of writings proposed to them as Apostolic, and to determine according to evidence. The Eclectic Review, 1814, p. 479, has the following observations on this subject:—"When we consider the number of Gospels, acts, epistles, revelations, traditions, and constitutions, which were put in circulation during the first three centuries, and which are unquestionably spurious, we find sufficient reason for examining with care, and receiving with extreme caution, productions attributed to eminent men in the primitive Church. *Some of the early Chris-*

* Bishop Marsh's Lectures, Sect. 13.

tians do not appear to have possessed in some points a very nice sense of moral obligation. The writing of books under false names, and the circulating of fables in the place of facts, were not accounted violations of duty; or, if the impropriety of such conduct was felt, the end proposed, the promotion of the Christian cause was thought to justify the means employed for its accomplishment." If this quotation gives a correct statement of the difficulties which surround the question, what faith can be placed in the books of the New Testament, as the revealed word of God? how can we expect a pure religion from such a contaminated source?

It is from this mass of forgeries and fables that our theologians attempt to ascertain what books are supposed to have been written by inspiration in the first century; and it is on the fallible and contradictory assertions of priests and commentators that the mass of the people rely for the Holy Scriptures. Unless it can be proved that Origen, who first made the selection of the present books of the New Testament from the hundreds of sacred books then in circulation; the council of Laodicea that first publicly adopted them as the standard of faith; with all the copyists, translators, and printers, that have been instrumental in bringing them into their present authorized form—unless it can be proved that all these were severally inspired by the Holy Ghost, we have no satisfactory proof that the present New Testament is any more to be relied on than the other numerous legends, fables, and traditions which were in circulation during the early centuries, and which have received the condemnation of all our orthodox evidence manufacturers. If the parties referred to, were not influenced by the Holy Spirit to make an infallible selection of the true from the false, we have no assurance beyond a mere probability, like any other matter of history, that these books are what they profess to be, and that they contain a faithful and true exposition of facts and principles connected with the origin and establishment of Christianity. What that probability amounts to, remains now to be considered, for it never has been yet asserted by any commentator, that the gift of inspiration extends to the parties to which reference has already been made, and therefore argument against that supposition is altogether unnecessary.

It is a usual practice in Courts of Law, to determine the value to be attached to any evidence by the general character of the witnesses brought forward. If any witness is proved to be dishonest, or prone to falsification, his or her evidence generally goes for nothing in the particular case upon which they appear. So with historians and biographers; we give credence to their narratives when we have learned them to be generally honest and trustworthy, while we attach little importance to their writings when we know them to be interested in concealing the truth and in bolstering up falsehood to serve particular inter-

ests and parties. Applying this standard to the early Christian fathers, and their successors, the monks and friars of the dark ages, through whose fingers has been filtered all the Christianity of modern times, we shall see how very little dependence is to be placed on any of those books which constitute the frame-work of Christian doctrine and ethics.

The great feature characteristic of the early fathers of the Church is the opinion, then universal, that it was necessary to deceive the vulgar. The celebrated Eusebius, one of the most zealous of Christian fathers, heads the 31st chapter of the 12th Book of his "Evangelical Preparation," with the following choice morsel,—"*How FAR IT MAY BE PROPER TO USE FALSEHOOD AS A MEDICINE, AND FOR THE BENEFIT OF THOSE WHO REQUIRE TO BE DECEIVED.*" The same doctrine of deceiving the vulgar is openly avowed by others. "*A little jargon,*" says Gregory of Nanzanzen (Bishop of Constantinople, and sur-named the "Divine,") "*is all that is necessary to impose on the people. The less they comprehend the more they admire. Our forefathers and doctors of the Church have often said not what they thought but what circumstances and necessity dictated to them.**"

"*The People.*" says Synesius, Bishop of Ptolemais, early in the fifth century, "*are desirous of being deceived. We cannot act otherwise with them. For my own part, to myself I shall always be a philosopher; but in dealing with the mass of the people I shall be a priest.†*"

Mosheim, the great ecclesiastical historian, affirms that in the fourth century, "*it was an almost universally adopted maxim, that it was an act of virtue to deceive and lie, when by such means the interests of the Church might be promoted,*"‡ and further on, when speaking of the fifth century, he says, "*the simplicity and ignorance of the generality in those times furnished the most favourable occasion for the exercise of fraud, and the impudence of impostors in contriving false miracles, was artfully proportioned to the credulity of the vulgar; while the sagacious and wise who perceived these cheats were over-awed into silence by the dangers that threatened their lives and fortunes, if they should expose the artifice.*"§ The historian includes in this charge of lying, Ambrose, Bishop of Milan; Hilary, Bishop of Poitiers; and Augustine, Bishop of Hippo in Africa, "*whose fame,*" (says the ecclesiastical historian,) "*filled, not without reason, the whole Christian world. We would willingly exempt them from this charge; but truth, which is more respectable than these venerable fathers, obliges us to involve them in the general accusation.*"§

* St. Jerome on Hieronymus, who acknowledged Gregory as his master. † Caves Ecclesiastice, p. 115. ‡ Mosh. vol. 1. p. 189.

§ Mosh. vol. 2. p. 11. § vol. 1. p. 310.

The Apostolic father, Hermas, who was the fellow-labourer of St Paul in the ministry, and greeted as such in the New Testament, and whose words are expressly quoted as of divine origin by the early fathers, ingeniously confesses the besetting sin of the Church, lying, at least as far as it concerned himself. The following are his words:—"O Lord, I never spake a true word in my life, but I have always lived in dissimulation and affirmed a lie for truth to all men, and no man contradicted me, but all gave credit to my words." To which the Holy angel to whom Hermas was addressing himself, replied, "as the lie was up, now, he had better keep it up; and as in time it would come to be believed, it would answer as well as truth.*

This spirit of fraud and deception characterises all the productions of those primitive times; all own, says Dr Lardner, that Christians of all sorts were guilty; it was the great fault of the age.† A fault which manifests itself strongly in the New Testament, as well as in the sources to which reference has already been made. Paul says, Romans, chap. iii. verse 7, "*For, if the truth of God hath more abounded through my lie unto his glory; why, yet I also am judged as a sinner.*" Again, the apostle in 1. Corinth. chap. ix. verse 22, avows a continued system of imposture and dissimulation, "*For unto the Jews says he, I became as a Jew that I might gain the Jews. To the weak, became I as weak, that I might gain the weak. I am made all things to all men.*" He also says, in 2d Thes. chap. ii. verse 11, 12, that "*God shall send them strong delusion that they should believe a lie, that they all might be damned.*"

Even Christ in the gospels is represented as setting the example of deceiving and imposing on the common people, and purposely speaking in parables, and using other obscure modes of expression, "that seeing they might see and not perceive; and hearing they might hear and not understand." Mark, iv. verse 12.

Having given the character of the witnesses in this case, as proved by their own followers, and illustrators—the modern ecclesiastical historians and commentators—it remains to be considered what importance should be attached to the authority of parties thus admitted to be notoriously given to lying and deception.

In judging this matter, it should be borne in mind that these early Christian fathers were the sole depositories of these sacred books. The great critic Semler states that "the Christian doctors never brought their sacred books before the common people, although people in general have been wont to think otherwise; during the first ages they were in the hands of the clergy only."

If, then, lying and fraud were the besetting sins of the primitive churches, and if all the

sacred books were in the keeping of the clergy, a strong case is made out against the genuineness, authenticity, and credibility of the New Testament. For we have no guarantee that the present books are not full of lies and frauds, as well as the other books which are admitted to have been so, and altogether unworthy of credence, seeing the character of the parties through whose hands they must have inevitably passed, and who had every interest, as well as opportunity, to alter and interpolate, to suit their peculiar notions. There is not the least shadow of a proof by which we can except the New Testament from such influences as we have pointed out. Its whole value, therefore, depends on the faith we place in the integrity of those by whom it was originated and preserved; and as we have shown, lying and deception to be their prominent characteristics, it must be admitted, a strong case is made out why the New Testament should be rejected as unworthy of respect or credence, as matter of history, and still more so as being the revealed word of God.

Having shown the deceptive character of the men through whose hands in early times the New Testament must have inevitably passed, and what immense opportunities they possessed of imposing frauds and fables on the people; we now proceed to make our position still stronger by exhibiting the absence of all cotemporaneous external evidence in support of the events narrated in the New Testament. In doing which, we shall take the supernatural birth, death, and the miracles of Jesus Christ, as the leading and most remarkable features of the New Testament—those, upon which the supernatural character of Christianity depends, and the points the most important to be settled in all controversy on this subject; as unless the truth of these be established the remainder of the New Testament must fall to the ground, in as far as it is to be recognised of divine origin. And in reviewing these, we shall show to what shifts Paley and his coadjutors have been driven in getting up external authorities confirmatory of such remarkable events, and how weak and untenable, after all their exertions, is the superstructure they have erected. First, then, respecting the birth of Christ, and his being conceived by the power of the Holy Ghost in the womb of a virgin.

The birth of a human being, by the ordinary course of nature, is a matter of easy admission, and in this sense the birth of a man 1842 years ago, called Jesus Christ, is an event quite in agreement with what is going around us hourly, and one admissible by a small amount of historical evidence. But when it is said that this person was not the son of a man, but the offspring of a Holy Ghost, and that his mother bare him and still retained her virginity and purity, it behoves us to pause and demand the most close and indubitable evidence of these circumstances, so repugnant to all experience, and so utterly opposed to the ordinary course of nature. Studying his-

* Apocryphal Book of Hermas.

† Lardner, vol. iv. p. 524.

EXTERNAL EVIDENCES OF CHRISTIANITY.

tory is but the weighing of probabilities, and those histories are held to be most probable that record events the most consistent with the regular course of nature, as exhibited in our experience of man and the external world. And in proportion as any event appears to be out of the ordinary order or course of things, so should the evidence in its support be of the most powerful and convincing character. The birth of Christ is not only out of the ordinary course of events, but in express violation of the established laws of nature, and therefore demands the most indisputable evidence before it can be worthy of the least credit as an historical fact. And yet strange to say, though at the time this wonderful event is said to have happened, Judea was a province of the Roman empire, and under the direction of men who could not avoid coming to a knowledge of such a circumstance, and thereby have given it a publicity so as to place the fact beyond the reach of doubt, all, from whom we might have expected corroborative evidence are silent on the subject. No testimony of the angel appearing to Joseph, announcing Mary's conception through the means of the Holy Ghost; no account of the angel's appearing to the shepherds at the birth, and announcing the advent of the man God; no proofs of the immaculate purity of the carpenter's wife: silence deep as night envelopes the whole affair.

The miracles which Christ is said to have performed, and his death and resurrection, are in a similar predicament respecting external evidence. No one bears evidence to the changing of water into wine; sending the devils into pigs; debating with the chief of devils forty days in a wilderness; raising the dead; or curing the sick. The nature of these miracles would have commanded the attention of all Judea, and through it of the Roman empire, and thus a publicity have been obtained that would have manifested itself in the pages of contemporaneous writers. But no such evidence is to be had. Josephus quotes none of the miracles, and though Christ is mentioned in his history as a "wise man," and a "performer of wonderful works," we shall presently prove that even this is a "pious fraud" of the early Christians, and unworthy of the least respect.

The only authorities mentioned by Christian writers, as referring to the miracles of Christ, are Josephus; Pontius Pilate, and Publius Lentulus, the two latter being Roman Governors of Judea; and how little these are to be depended on will shortly appear.

Nor is the death and resurrection in a better position. The miraculous darkness, lasting three hours, according to Matthew, chap. xxvii. verse 45, was an event which must have attracted the attention of cotemporary naturalists. Yet they are silent on the subject.

That neither this nor any of the other miracles and supernatural events were taken notice of by the philosophers of the time, we have the autho-

rity of Gibbon.* "How shall we excuse the supine inattention (says the historian of the Roman empire) of the Pagan and philosophic world, to these evidences which were presented by the hand of Omnipotence, not to their reason, but their senses!"

During the age of Christ, of his apostles, and of their disciples, the doctrine which they preached was confirmed by innumerable prodigies—the lame walked; the blind saw; the sick were healed; the dead were raised; demons were expelled; and the laws of nature suspended for the benefit of the Church. But the sages of Greece and Rome turned aside from the awful spectacle; and pursuing the ordinary avocations of life and study, appeared unconscious of any alterations in the moral or physical government of the world. Under the reign of Tiberius, the whole earth, or at least a celebrated province of the Roman empire, was involved in a preternatural darkness of three hours. Even this miraculous event, which ought to have excited the wonder, the curiosity, or the devotion of mankind, passed without notice in an age of science and history.† It happened during the life time of Seneca, and the elder Pliny, who must have experienced the immediate effects, or received the earliest intelligence of the prodigy. Each of these philosophers, in a laboured work, has recorded all the great phenomena of nature, earthquakes, meteors, comets, and eclipses, which his indefatigable curiosity could collect.‡ Both one and the other have omitted to mention the greatest phenomenon to which the moral eye has been witness since the creation of the globe. A distinct chapter of Pliny§ is designed for eclipses of an extraordinary nature and unusual character; but he contents himself with describing the singular defect of light which followed the murder of Cæsar, when during the greatest part of the year the orb of the sun appeared pale and without splendour. This season of obscurity, which cannot surely be compared with the preternatural darkness of the Passion, had been already celebrated by most of the poets§ and historians of that memorable age.¶

If the miracles, and supernatural death and resurrection of Christ, can be believed in by any of our readers, after the perusal of these facts, the believer's faith is more easily satisfied than ours. It is remarkable the number of respectable authorities that vouch for the preternatural darkness following

* Decline and Fall, vol. i. p. 451-2.

† The celebrated passage of Phlegon is now abandoned.

‡ Seneca Quæst. Natur. i. 1, 15; vi. 1; vii. 17. Plin. Hist. Nat. i. 11.

§ Plin. Hist. Nat. ii. 30. § Virgil, Georgic, i. 466. Tibullus, Lib. i. eleg. v. verse 75. Ovid, Metamor. xv. 78 2. Lucan Pharsal i. 540. ¶ Joseph. Antiq. xlv. 12. Plutarch, in Cæsar, p. 741. Appian. Bell. Civil. Lib. iv. Dion Cassius, Lib. xiv, Julius Obseques, cap. 120.

the death of Caesar, and one of these, too, a contemporary, when the story is an acknowledged fable, no such darkness having taken place.

Josephus, Plutarch, and Appian, are names respected for historical integrity; and yet, (however difficult it may be to explain here) they were either deceivers or deceived. And yet, if the New Testament miracles had half as much proof as this profane darkness commands, we should never hear the end of the harangues of the evidence, scribes and Christian commentators. Again we repeat, not one respectable contemporary historian bears evidence to the supernatural events of the New Testament; and no subsequent Pagan historian gives the least support to the notion that such miracles ever took place. 'Tis true, Paley has raked together a few passages ascribed to the authors, as already stated, but which are now admitted, by the most eminent critics, to be downright forgeries on the authors in whose works they appear. Josephus, Pontius Pilate, Publius Lentulus, and Phlegon, are the parties referred to.

Josephus is the only well known and respectable name of the number, and the passage ascribed to him appears in his work on the Jewish Antiquities, chapter eighteen, and section third. It runs thus:—"About that time appeared Jesus, a wise man, if indeed it be right to speak of him as a man, for he was a performer of wonderful works, a teacher of such men as receive the truth with pleasure. He drew after him many of the Jews as well as of the Gentiles. *This same was the Christ.* And though Pilate, by the judgment of the chief rulers among us, delivered him to be crucified, those that from the first had loved him, fell not from him, for to them at least he showed himself alive on the third day. This, and *ten thousand* other wonderful things, ~~being what~~ the holy prophets had foretold concerning him; so that the Christian people, who derive their name from him, have not yet ceased to exist." This passage was first quoted by that laborious evidence maker, Eusebius, who exults over it, as having found a prodigious prize. Yet notwithstanding, it has been shown almost to demonstration, and by learned and orthodox Christians too, that Josephus did not write this passage, and that in all probability, according to the practice of the age, Eusebius manufactured it himself, and interpolated it into the pages of Josephus. Dr Lardner has decided that this passage is an interpolation. It is rejected by Ittigius, Blondel, Le Clerc, Vaudale, Bishop Warburton, and Tanaquil Faber. The latter suspects that Eusebius was the author; and Gibbon states that it must at least have been introduced between the time of Origen and that of Eusebius, and furnishes an example of no vulgar forgery.*

As Dr Lardner stands at the head of the "Christian evidence" writers, and as this passage of Josephus is the most respectable external

authority Christians have hitherto brought forward, we subjoin the Doctor's reasons for its rejection, in his own words.

1. "I do not perceive that we at all want this suspected testimony to Jesus, which was never quoted by any of our Christian ancestors before Eusebius.†

2. "Nor do I recollect that Josephus has any where mentioned the name or word *Christ*, in any of his works, except the testimony above mentioned, and the passage concerning the Lord's brother.‡

3. "It interrupts the narrative.

4. "*The language is quite Christian.*

5. "It is not quoted by St Chrysostom, though he often refers to Josephus, and could not have omitted quoting it, had it been then in the text.

6. "It is not quoted by Photius, though he has three articles concerning Josephus.

7. "Under the article Justus of Tiberias this author (Photius) expressly states, that this historian (Josephus) being a Jew, has not taken the least notice of Christ.

8. "Neither Justin in his dialogue with Trypho the Jew, nor Clemens Alexandrinus, who made so many extracts from ancient authors, nor Origen against Celsus, have ever mentioned this testimony.

9. "But on the contrary, in chapter xxxv. of the first book of that work, Origen openly affirms that Josephus, who had mentioned John the Baptist, *did not acknowledge Christ.*"

For which reasons, Dr Lardner maintains, that the passage "ought therefore to be for ever discarded from any place among the evidences of Christianity."§

Having shown how little this supposed testimony of Josephus is worth, we proceed to dispose of the other three, Pontius Pilate, Publius Lentulus, and Phlegon.

From the supposition that the Roman Governors were in the habit of sending to the Emperors periodical accounts of their stewardship, the early Christian fathers, in certain epistles, inserted a forged correspondence of Pilate, which that Governor is represented to have written to the Emperor Tiberius, containing, among other matters, an account of the crucifixion of Christ, and how he appeared to be a divine person. But the supposed correspondence, and the steps which Tiberias is said to have taken upon its reception, such as entering it in the public records, and taking steps to mitigate the severity of the laws against the Christians, long before there were any laws in existence against them—all these, recorded in the said Epistle, yet unsupported by any historian of the times, or by any public record of the Roman Empire, have so destroyed the value of this "pious fraud," that modern critics, even the

† Dr Lardner's answers to Dr Chandler.

‡ Ibid.

§ Life of Dr Lardner, by Kippis, p. 23.

* Decline and Fall, chap. 16.

most orthodox, reject it with disdain. One of the letters ascribed to Pilate is so heterogenous, as to need no refutation. Who, in his senses, would believe that a Roman Governor, and an unbeliever too, would write such a passage as follows, and that no historian would take notice of it. It refers to the Crucifixion.

"There was darkness over the whole earth, the sun in the middle of the day being darkened, and the stars appearing, among whose lights the moon appeared not, but as if turned to blood, it left of shining." Again, it goes on to say, "early in the morning of the first of the Sabbaths, the resurrection of Christ was announced by a display of the most astonishing feats of Divine Omnipotence ever performed. At the third hour of the night, the sun broke forth in such splendour as was never before seen, and the heavens became enlightened seven times more than any other day;" and as a proper finale to the scene, "an instantaneous chasm took place, and the earth opened and swallowed up all the unbelieving Jews; *their temple and synagogues all vanished away, and the next morning there was not so much as one of them left in all Jerusalem, and the Roman soldiers went stark staring mad.*" And yet no historian narrates these events; Josephus is silent; and even the four Evangelists durst not make it so outrageous, as to cause to be swallowed up all the unbelieving Jews, make away with the temple and all their synagogues, and driving the soldiers "stark staring mad." Surely such a convulsion as this should have had a chronicler to redeem it from oblivion, and surely the annals of the Roman empire would have preserved a record; but, alas! it stands as naked of collateral support, as is the forest of foliage in the month of December. These "pious impositions" on the name of Pilate were first employed, perhaps manufactured, by that prince of assertors, Justin Martyr.

The epistle in which the letter of Publius Lentulus, the predecessor of Pilate, is inserted, is of a similar stamp, and but of recent appearance. It pretends to describe very minutely the personal appearance of Christ, and the works he performed; and from its contents it would appear he must have been a very good looking personage. This epistle was first found in the history of Christ, as written in Persic, by Jeremy or Hieronymus Xavier. It is now rejected as a forgery; and inasmuch as it is of comparatively recent appearance, and was first found in a Life of Christ by a priest, and has never been referred to by any one in early times, the evidence is quite conclusive against it. Had it appeared in the pages of any Pagan historian, it might have been worth some consideration; but, as it is, it appears evidently a "pious fraud."

The testimony of Phlegon has been long given up; nor is it ever adduced by our modern and rational divines. Gibbon, in his usual caustic way, says, "the celebrated passage of Phlegon is now wisely abandoned." The following is it:—
"In the fourth year of the two hundred and

second Olympiad, there was an eclipse of the sun, greater than any ever known before: and it was night at the sixth hour of the day, so that even the stars appeared, and there was a great earthquake in Bythinia, that overthrew several houses in Nice."

We may add, that upon comparison of the time mentioned with Bible chronology, this earthquake, if true, happened on a different day than the crucifixion, and therefore is of no use in proving the truth of the latter event.

Reference has now been made to all the external evidence which has been adduced in favour of the miraculous events of the New Testament; whatever other authorities may have been quoted, refer entirely to natural events connected with the origin and progress of Christianity. The passage in the annals of Tacitus, which were written the middle of the first century, refers to Nero inflicting "exquisite punishment" on people held in great abhorrence for their crimes, and who were "commonly known by the name of Christians." "They had their denomination (the passage goes on to say) from Christus, who, in the reign of Tiberius, was put to death as a criminal by Pontius Pilate." The Christian system is further called a "pernicious superstition," and then the kind of punishments inflicted on its votaries are fully described. Supposing this passage had been written by Tacitus, it would be of no service in proving the supernatural origin of Christianity, for it has reference to events entirely within the reach of common probability, and says nothing about its miracles and wonders. But even this passage has been shown to have every characteristic of a pious fraud. It is not quoted by Tertullian, though he quotes largely from Tacitus; this writer has spoken of Tacitus in a manner that if this passage had really existed, he could not avoid having used it. Clemens Alexandrinus, who collected all the admissions and recognitions which Pagan authors had made in favour of Christ or Christians before his time, makes no reference to Tacitus. It is nowhere stumbled upon by the laborious Eusebius. There is not the least vestige or trace of it any where in the world till the fifteenth century, and then it rests on the faith of one individual; the first publication of any part of the Annals of Tacitus being by Johannes de Spire, at Venice, in the year 1468, and his imprint made from a single manuscript in his own power and possession only, and purporting to be written in the eighth century. The passage, besides, is opposed to the general mild spirit of the writings of Tacitus, and is falsified by the Apology of Tertullian,* and the testimony of Melito, bishop of Sardis,† who explicitly states, that the Christians, up to his time, the third century, had never been persecuted.

The other Pagan writers who refer to Christianity are but of little use to the Christian evi-

* Testimony of Tert. in Reeves' Apologies of, &c.

† Eusebius Eccles. on Melito.

dence manufacturers. Scutonium, 110 A.C. is represented calling the "Christians a race of men of a new and villanous superstition—wicked or magical superstition." We dare say no Christian will relish this as a correct portraiture. He also states that Claudius "drove" the Jews, who, at the suggestion of Krestus, were constantly rioting, out of Rome. Surely Jesus Christ of Nazareth could not be the leader of a Jewish mob in the streets of Rome. Pliny is almost the only other Pagan writer of those early times that mentions the Christians; and all that is ascribed to him has reference only to the proceedings of certain Christians in the province of Bythinia, of which he was proconsul or governor.

It ought further to be observed, that the early Christians did not agree among themselves respecting the Gospel story. Menander, Marcion, Valentine, Basilides, Bardesanus, Cerdon, Manes, Leucius, and Faustus, with their followers, denied the human nature of Christ. From the early times many denied Christ's divinity, of whom Artimon, Theodotus, Sabellius, Marcellus, and Photinus, are the most noted. The Basilidians denied that ever Christ was crucified, but that Cymon of Cyrene was crucified in his stead. Almost from the apostolic age has the resurrection been rejected: the Cerinthians, Valentinians, Cerdonians, Marcionites, Bardisanites, Origenites, Hierakites, and Manichees, give it up. When doctors disagree, who shall decide?

How the Church, when possessed of power, used every kind of intimidation to put down controversy, and to destroy all works expressing different opinions to those it held as orthodox, is admirably exemplified in the treatment which the works of Porphyry received. He was a zealous exposé of the frauds and forgeries of the Christian fathers, and to this effect he composed a large work of thirty books about the year 250. How did the Christians meet it? by argument? No! but by the following proclamation in the name of the most Christian Emperor Theodosius,—"We decree, therefore, that all writings whatever which Porphyry or any one else may have written against the Christian religion, in the possession of whomsoever they shall be found, should be committed to the fire, for we would not suffer those things so much as to come to man's ears to provoke God to wrath, and to offend the minds of the pious."* This was free inquiry with a vengeance!

To show still further the utter impossibility of the Bible being a "revelation of God" to the people, we conclude this article by the following orthodox guides and rules for a due understanding of this holy book, which we are often told is so simple that the way-faring man "may read and not err therein." "To understand the Scriptures," says Professor Campbell, "we should get acquainted with each writer's style;—2. Inquire carefully into their character, office, and situation; and the time, place, and

occasion of their writing, and the people for whose use they wrote;—3. Consider the scope, &c. of the book;—4. And, where the phrase is obscure, consult the context. This will not always answer;—5. If not, consider whether it be any of the writer's peculiarities; if so, inquire what is the acceptance of it in other places;—6. If this fail, have recourse to parallel passages;—7. If this fail, consult the Old Testament and Septuagint, where the word may be used;—8. And the classic writers;—9. And the Fathers;—10. And the ancient versions, modern scholiasts, annotators, and translators;—11. The analogy of faith, and the etymologies of words; which must be used with caution." In addition to these or similar general rules, Mr Horne furnishes us with ten rules for investigating the original meaning of Scripture-words; five of that for emphasis, with which the Scripture abounds; and eight for parallelism, of which three kinds are specified. To discover the sense also by the subject matter, and by the context, for which we have seven rules; and also by historical circumstances, including ten particulars, "indispensably necessary to a correct interpretation of the Bible:" namely, the order, title, author, date, place where writ, chronology, occasion, scope, analysis, biblical antiquities. For investigating the scope we have six rules; and eight for investigating the analogy of faith, "one of the most important aids that can be employed for ascertaining the sense of Scripture," to which "humble supplication to the throne of grace" must be added. But our labour is not yet ended. We are farther furnished with seven rules for the historical interpretation of Scripture; and twelve for interpreting the figurative language, of which the most important is, that "the literal meaning of the words is to be given up, if it be improper or involve an impossibility, or is contrary to common sense." Then numerous rules are given for interpreting the various kinds of metonymies occurring in Scripture; others for the metaphors—for the allegories—for the parables—for the proverbs—for the figures—and for the spiritual interpretations. Then come a great variety for the interpretation of the prophecies—the types, legal, prophetic and historical; and no fewer than 22 for the interpretation of doctrines.*

A curious divine revelation this must be truly, to require such a formidable list of rules, and so much learning before it can be understood, and then, after all, to be only guessing at what it really means. The objections we have accumulated in reviewing the internal and external evidences, cannot fail to have impressed the most prejudiced mind, and in case some doubts should still remain unsatisfied, the prophecies and miracles will be disposed of in the ensuing two numbers.

* Horne's Introduction to the Scriptures.

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THE PROPHECIES AND MIRACLES OF THE BIBLE.

It has been often said that Christianity is a grand scheme which can alone be properly understood and admired, when viewed in all its component parts;—beginning with "the fall of man," and ending with "the redemption through the blood of Christ." Already full consideration has been given to the various items which make up this "great scheme of salvation," with the exception of the prophecies and miracles. And that nothing essential may remain uncriticised, and that the grand whole may be placed clearly before the reader, the present article shall be devoted to a full consideration of the value and application of the Jewish prophecies, and the amount of credit due to the Bible miracles.

THE PROPHECIES.

The principal prophecies of the Old Testament are twisted by the priests of Christianity to mean the birth and mission of Jesus Christ; the agreement, it is asserted, which exists between the prophecies referred to, and the events connected with the introduction of Christianity, being clear proofs of the genuineness and inspiration of these predictions. For the sake of clearness, we shall take each of the prophets in rotation, and endeavour to learn how far there exists that agreement between their prophecies and the events which are said to have been the fulfilment, which Christians assert to be the great evidence of the truth and divine character of these prognostications. First in the order stands Isaiah, both as it respects place and importance.

Isaiah.

The following passage in Isaiah, chapter vii. verse 14., "Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bare a son, and shall call his name Immanuel," has been interpreted to mean Jesus Christ, and his mother, the carpenter's wife; and as such has been represented throughout the Christian world for more than a thousand years, and held to be one of the most clear and important of all the Bible prophecies. It can, however, be distinctly shown by the context to have nothing whatever to do with Christ and his mother. The plain meaning is as follows:—The King of Syria and the King of Israel (for at this time the chosen people were divided

under two kings) made war jointly against Ahaz, King of Judah, and marched their armies towards Jerusalem, the capital of Ahaz. The latter with his people became alarmed, and, according to verse 2d of the same chapter, "their hearts were moved, as trees of wood are moved with the wind." In this crisis of affairs, the prophet addresses himself to Ahaz, in the usual cant phrase—"the name of the Lord"—assuring him that these two kings should not succeed against him; and to satisfy Ahaz, that this should be the case, requests him to ask a sign. He refuses, alleging as a reason that he would not tempt the Lord; upon which Isaiah says, ver. 14., "Therefore, the Lord himself shall give you a sign, *behold a virgin shall conceive and bare a son*;" and the 16th verse says, "*And before this child shall know to refuse the evil and choose the good*, the land which thou abhorrest (meaning Syria and the kingdom of Israel) shall be forsaken of both her kings. And it shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord shall hiss (or whistle) for the flies that are in the brooks of Egypt, and for the bees that are in the land of Assyria. In the same day shall the Lord *shave* with a razor that is hired, namely, by them beyond the river, by the King of Assyria, the head and the hair of the feet, and it shall also consume the beard." Here, then, was the sign, and the time limited for the completion of the promise, namely, before the child could be able to distinguish the good and the evil. Isaiah having thus committed himself, found it necessary, to avoid the imputation of being considered a false prophet, to take some steps to make the sign appear. He therefore set about the getting of a child as quickly as possible; for he says in next chapter, verses 2d and 3d, "And I took unto me faithful witnesses to record, Uziah the priest, and Zechariah, son of Jeberechiah. And I went into the prophetess, and she conceived and bare a son," which son, by the command "of the Lord," is called by the euphonious name of "*Maher-Shalal-hash-baz*." It is further stated, ver. 4, "Before the child shall have knowledge to cry my father and my mother, the riches of Damascus and the spoil of Samaria shall be taken away before the Kings of Assyria."

This is the whole story, and foolish enough it is—upon the barefaced perversion of which the writer of the book of Matthew, and the sordid priests of Christianity, have founded the theory of what they call the Gospel, and referring to a period seven hundred years after the story was told.

To show the imposition and falsehood of Isaiah, we have only to attend to the sequel of this story, which, though passed over in silence in the book of Isaiah, is given in the 28th chapter of 2d Chronicles, which is—that instead of these two kings failing in their attempt against Ahaz king of Israel, as foretold by the prophet, *they succeeded*; Ahaz was defeated and destroyed; a hundred and twenty thousand of his people were slaughtered; Jerusalem was plundered; and two hundred thousand women and sons and daughters carried into captivity. The Jewish Rabbins Isaac affirms, with all the other doctors of his law, that the Hebrew word "*alma*" sometimes signifies a virgin and sometimes a married woman; that Ruth is called "*alma*" when she was a mother; that even an adulteress is sometimes so called; that nobody is meant in the foregoing prophecy but the wife of Isaiah the prophet; and that when this son could eat "*honey and butter*," the two kings which besieged Jerusalem would be driven from the country.

It would have been a mockery and insult for Isaiah to have assured Ahaz, as a sign, that these two kings should not prevail against him, till a child should be born seven hundred years after he was dead; and that before the child so born should know to refuse the evil and choose the good, Ahaz should be delivered from the danger he was then threatened with.

The words of the 1st and 2d verses of the 9th chapter of Isaiah, have been tortured by the writer of Matthew into a prophecy concerning Christ: they are these:—Nevertheless, the dimness shall not be such as was in her vexation, when at first he lightly afflicted the *land of Zebulon and the land of Naphthali, and afterwards did more grievously afflict her by the way of the sea beyond Jordan in Galilee of the nations*. The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light: they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them the light shined."

This relates to two circumstances that had already happened at the time these words in Isaiah were written. The one where the land of Zebulon and Naphthali had been lightly afflicted, and afterwards more grievously by the way of the sea beyond Jordan. Now, mark the deception of the writer of Matthew. He begins his quotation (Matt. iv. v. 12) in the middle of a sentence, where there is not so much as a comma cutting off all that relates to the first affliction. He then leaves out all that relates to the second affliction, and by this means cut out everything that makes the

verse intelligible. The Evangelist's words are as follows:—"The land of Zebulon and the land of Naphthali, by the way of the sea beyond Jordan in Galilee of the Gentiles: the people which sat in darkness saw a great light, and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death light is springing upon them." It is gross impertinence thus to cut and mangle the passage, so as to render it unintelligible, and then to palm it on the credulous as a prophecy. The statement about the people walking in darkness, and the light breaking in upon them, is not a prophecy at all, but entirely historical, referring to things *that were accomplished* when the words were written; and if we look into the preceding chapter—the 8th, of which the 9th is a continuation—we shall find some information respecting this darkness and light. The writer at the 10th verse speaks of witches and wizards who peep about and mutter, and of people who made application to them; and he preaches and exhorts them against this darksome practice. It is of this hostile and darksome practice, or "walking in darkness," he is speaking in the 2d verse of chapter ix; and respecting the "light that had shone in upon them," it refers entirely to his own ministry, and to the boldness of it, which opposed itself to that of "the witches and wizards who peeped about and muttered."

The words in Isaiah, chap. xi. v. 3, "The voice of him crying in the wilderness, prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his path straight," and said to be predictive of John the Baptist, are in the preter tense, and consequently not prophetic. It is one of the rhetorical figures with which the Bible abounds. That it is merely rhetorical and metaphorical, not prophetic, is proved by the 6th verse—"And the voice said, Cry; and he said, What shall I cry? *All flesh is grass*." This is nothing but figurative, for flesh is not grass, otherwise than as a figure or metaphor, where one thing is put for another. The whole passage is so vague and declamatory, as to be inapplicable to any particular person or event.

The 52d and 53d chapters of Isaiah have also been much extolled by Christians as a prediction of the sufferings of Christ; but which it will be seen would suit equally well any other person that had been oppressed. The whole of the 53d chapter is a lamentation of some deceased person, (it being written in the preter tense,) of whom the writer speaks very pathetically. But the name of the person, nor any other circumstance of him, by which he can be personally known, is not given. It is said "He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before his shearers, is dumb, so he opened not his mouth." This may be said of thousands of persons who have suffered oppression and unjust death with patience, sil-

ence, and perfect resignation; and the passage applies as much to them as to Jesus Christ. There is nothing said about curing the sick, raising the dead, or casting out devils; and therefore it cannot, by the utmost stretch of priestly imagination, be tortured into anything like a prediction of Christ. The whole passage is a monody on some deceased person; and none but a bigot or an impostor would call it a prophecy of Jesus Christ. Matthew, in chapter viii. verse 16, and Mark, chapter xv. verse 28, both refer to this passage—though the former makes an incorrect quotation in the portion he transcribes. Grotius supposes that the person of whom Isaiah is speaking is Jeremiah, who had been accused, condemned, and imprisoned by his countrymen; as Jeremiah says, chapter ii. verse 19—"But as for me I was like a lamb, or an ox that is brought to the slaughter."

The imagination of priestcraft has likewise twisted the following passages into predictions of Christ:—Chapter lxiii. verse 1, "Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah?—this that is glorious in his apparel, travelling in the greatness of his strength? I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save;" and again, in chapter ii. (talking of the supposed Christ.) Isaiah says—"And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people; and they shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruninghooks," &c.—Ver. 18, "And the idols he shall utterly abolish." Can it be affirmed that this alludes to Christ? Did he come from Edom in mighty power, in rich garments? Was his march so terrible? Was he the man who trampled all in his fury, who, with his own arm, brought salvation to himself, and was upheld by his fury, as mentioned in the same chapter? The circumstances connected with the appearance of Christ, as given in the New Testament, and this description, are perfectly irreconcilable.

No other prophecies in the book of Isaiah have the same claim on our attention as those we have just considered, as none other have, by Christians, been held so prophetic of the coming of Christ; and how little these are worth for such a purpose we have sufficiently made clear. With one or two vague exceptions, which may be made to apply to Christianity, or a hundred other things, all the other prophecies of Isaiah are entirely of a local character, and foreign to the present inquiry; and as we have broken down the great prophecies on which Christians principally depend, we shall now pass on to the next prophet in the series.

Jeremiah,

In our treatise on the "Internal Evidences &c." we exhibited what a lying prophet Jeremiah proved himself in relation to King Zede-

kiah. He was one of those sly seers, that are exceedingly cautious how they commit themselves. In the 7th and 8th verses of the xvii. chap. he makes the Lord to say, "At what instant I shall speak of a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to pluck up, and to pull down, and to destroy it, if that nation against whom I have pronounced, turn from their evil ways, *I will repent me of the evil that I thought to do unto them.*" Here was a proviso on one side of the case, now for the other, verses 9 and 10. "At what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to build and to plant it, if it do evil in my sight, that it obey not my voice, then *I will repent me of the good wherewith I said I would benefit them.*" According to this kind of prophesying, a prophet could never go wrong, however mistaken the Lord might be.

This book of Jeremiah is exceedingly vague and unconnected, without order, date, or explanation, and in many places quite contradictory. We will give an example or two.

From the 37th chap., it appears that the army of Nebuchadnezzar, which is called the army of the Chaldeans, had besieged Jerusalem some time; and upon hearing that Pharaoh, king of Egypt, with an army was marching against them, they retreated for a time. It may be proper to mention, that Nebuchadnezzar had previously besieged and taken Jerusalem during the reign of Jehoiakim, the predecessor of Zedekiah; and that it was Nebuchadnezzar who had made Zedekiah, king, or rather deputy; and that this second siege was in consequence of the revolt of Zedekiah. This will to some extent account for the suspicion entertained that Jeremiah was a traitor in the interest of the king of Babylon, whom he calls in verse 10, the "servant of God."

In the 11th verse of the same chapter (the 37th) it is said, "And it came to pass that when the army of the Chaldeans was broken up from Jerusalem for fear of Pharaoh's army, then Jeremiah went forth out of Jerusalem to go (as this account states) into the land of Benjamin, to separate himself thence in the midst of the people; and when he was in the gate of Benjamin a captain of the ward was there, whose name was Irjah; and he took Jeremiah the prophet, saying, *thou fallest away to the Chaldeans*: then said Jeremiah, *it is false, I fall not away to the Chaldeans.*" Jeremiah being thus stopped and accused, was after being examined, committed to prison on suspicion of being a traitor, as stated in the last verse of the chapter.

But another version of the imprisonment is given in the next chapter, which has no connection with this account, but ascribes his imprisonment to another circumstance, for which we must go back to the 21st chapter. In the 1st verse it is stated that Zedekiah sent Pashur, the son of Melchiah, and Zephaniah, the son

of Maaseiah the priest, to Jeremiah to inquire of him concerning Nebuchadnezzar, whose army was then before Jerusalem; and Jeremiah said unto them, verse 8th and 9th—*"Thus saith the Lord, Behold I set before you the way of life and the way of death: he that abideth in this city shall die by the sword, and by the famine, and by the pestilence; but he that goeth out, and falleth to the Chaldeans that besiege you, he shall live, and his life shall be unto him for a prey."*

This conference breaks off abruptly at the end of the 10th verse of the 21st chapter; and such is the confusion and disorder of the books that we have to pass over sixteen chapters upon various subjects, in order to come at the continuation and result of this conference; and this brings us to the 1st verse of the 38th chapter, which begins by saying—*"Then Shephatiah, the son of Pashur, and Jucal, the son of Shelemiah, (here are more persons mentioned than in the 21st chapter) heard the words that Jeremiah spoke unto the people, saying, Thus saith the Lord, he that remaineth in this city shall die by the sword, by the famine, and by the pestilence; but he that goeth forth to the Chaldeans shall live, for he shall have his life for a prey, and shall live—therefore, (says they, the deputation unto Zedekiah,) we beseech thee, let this man be put to death, for thus he weakeneth the hands of the men of war that remain in this city, and the hands of all the people, in speaking such words unto them; for this man seeketh not the welfare of the people, but the hurt."* And in the 6th verse it is said—*"Then they took Jeremiah and put him into the dungeon of Malchiah."* The two accounts we have given are quite different and contradictory. The one ascribes his imprisonment to his attempts to escape out of the city—the other to his preaching and prophesying in the city. The one says he was seized by the guard at the gate—the other, that he was accused before Zedekiah by the deputation which had waited on him.

Out of the loose and incoherent jargon ascribed to Jeremiah, there is only one or two passages that modern Christians have seized upon as referring pointedly to the foundation of their faith. One passage is referred to in Matthew after the account of the massacre of the little children by Herod. Chap. ii. verse 17, it is said, *"Then was fulfilled what was spoken by Jeremiah, saying, in Ramah there was a voice heard, lamentation and weeping, and great morning; Rachael weeping for her children, and would not be comforted because they were not."*

The words of Jeremiah are as follows.—*"Thus saith the Lord, a voice was heard in Ramah, lamentation and bitter weeping; Rachel weeping for her children, refused to be comforted for her children, because they were not."*

There is clearly nothing in this verse that denotes any particular application of it, otherwise than pointing to some circumstances which had happened previously to its being written, and not to any thing that was to happen in the future; and this explanation is borne out by the succeeding verses 16, 17: *"Thus saith the Lord, refrain thy voice from weeping, and thine eyes from tears; for thy work shall be rewarded, saith the Lord, and they shall come again from the land of the enemy. And there is hope in thine end, saith the Lord, that thy children shall come again to their own border."*

As already explained, Jeremiah lived at the time Nebuchadnezzar took Jerusalem; led the Jews captive to Babylon; and otherwise treated them with great violence. It is this time that Jeremiah refers to as the period of "lamentations and bitter weeping." Their temple was destroyed; their land overrun and desolated; their government broken up, and themselves, men, women, and children carried into Babylon. They had, therefore, too many sorrows of their own to cry about, to allow the time of any of their song-makers or prophets to be engaged upon what might happen seven hundred years after. The 16 and 17 verses clearly point to the circumstances the Jews were then placed in, for the Lord is made to say their sufferings should have an end, and that *their children should again return to their own land.*

By what obtuseness of intellect, then, could the writer, or compiler of the book of Matthew make, verse 15, mean the slaughtered little children, by Herod? Surely these could not "return again from the land of the enemy, and come again into their own borders." The Israelites were always called the children of Israel, and the passage about the "weeping in Ramah," inasmuch as it is in the present tense, must refer to the taking of Jerusalem, and the carrying of its inhabitants into captivity, and to no other event. Another one of Jeremiah's prophecies has been cited as a prediction of the betrayal of Christ by Judas, and the buying of a field with the thirty pieces of silver. Reference is made to this passage in the book of Matthew; we will cite the whole passage: Jeremiah, chap. xxxii, *"And Jeremiah said, the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, 'Behold Hananiah, the son of Shallum, thine uncle, shall come unto thee, saying, buy thee thy field that is in Anathoth, for the right of redemption is thine to buy it. So, Hananiah, mine uncle's son, came to me in the court of the prison, according to the word of the Lord, and said unto me, buy my field, I pray thee, that is in Anathoth, which is in the country of Benjamin, for the right of inheritance is thine, and the redemption is thine; buy it for thyself. Then I knew this was the word of the Lord, and I bought the field of Hananiah, mine uncle's son, that was in Anathoth,*

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and weighed him the money, even seventeen shekels of silver; and I subscribed the evidence and sealed it, and took witnesses, and weighed the money in balances. So I took evidence of the purchase, both that which was sealed according to law and custom, and that which was open; and I gave the evidence of the purchase unto Baruch, the son of Neriah, the son of Maaseiah, in the sight of Hananiah, mine uncle's son, and in the presence of the witnesses that subscribed, before all the Jews that sat in the court of prison; and I charged Baruch before them, saying, Thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, take these evidences, this evidence of the purchase, both which is sealed, and this evidence which is open, and put them in an earthen vessel that they may continue for many days; for thus saith the Lord of Hosts, the God of Israel, houses, and fields, and vineyards, shall be possessed again in this land." It is upon this passage that Matthew attempts to foist the following most unwarrantable construction, chap. xxvii. verse 3, "Then Judas, which had betrayed him, when he saw that he was condemned, repented himself, and brought again the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders, saying, I have sinned in that; I have betrayed the innocent blood. And they said, what is that to us? See thou to that. And he cast down the pieces of silver and departed, and went and hanged himself. And the chief priests took the silver pieces and said it was not lawful to put them in the treasury, because it is the price of blood. And they took counsel, and bought with them the potter's field to bury strangers in, wherefore, that field is called the field of blood unto this day. *Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremiah the prophet,* saying, And they took the thirty pieces of silver, the price of him that was valued, whom they of the children of Israel did value, and gave them for the potter's field, as the Lord appointed me."

This is a downright imposition. The passage we have quoted from Jeremiah, has no more to do with the case to which Matthew applies it, than it has to do with the purchasing of land in this country or America; and so far from even the pieces of silver tallying, there is *seventeen* in the one case, and *thirty* in the other.

Ezekiel

Ezekiel was carried captive to Babylon under the first captivity, in the time of Jehoiakim; and, as the Jews were then still numerous at Jerusalem, it is natural that the prophet would often meditate on the recovery of his country and his own deliverance; and hence no doubt ariseth the visions and dreams with which his book is filled, as being a disguised mode of correspondence to facilitate these objects. The book begins with the vision of a

cherubim, and a wheel within a wheel, which he saw by the river Chebar, in the land of his captivity, referring in all likelihood to circumstances which might then be easily understood by his countrymen through the veil of allegory, though at present unintelligible to us. If viewed in this sense, the ravings of Ezekiel may be allowable; but if taken as prophecies they are of no value. And as an instance take chap. xxix. verse 11.; in speaking of Egypt, it is said, "No foot of man shall pass through it, nor foot of beast shall pass through it; neither shall it be inhabited for forty years." This is what never came to pass, and consequently it is false. With this specimen of the accnacy of Ezekiel's prophecying, inasmuch as we have already made reference to the disgusting and filthy passages of his book, in the treatise on the "Internal Evidences;" and, as the Christian priests place little value on it as a prognostication of their pet scheme, we pass on to Daniel, which is the next in rotation.

Daniel.

Daniel, like Ezekiel, was a captive in Babylon, and hence, like the latter, had to resort to dreams and visions to disguise his real meaning from the enemy. Nothing can be more absurd than to suppose men in the situation of Ezekiel and Daniel would take up their attention with what was to happen a thousand years hence, when their own condition, with that of their countrymen, was so perilous; while, on the other hand, nothing is more natural than that they should meditate the recovery of their lost country and their return thereto; and hence no doubt is to be attributed much of the obscure and frantic writings in their books.

As the celebrated prophecy in Daniel, of the seventy weeks, is one on which Christians rely as much, if not more so, than any other in the Old Testament, we shall discuss it at some length; in doing which we shall quote, for the benefit of the reader, the very excellent remarks in explanations of it by Dr. Francis, in his reply to the Bishop of Llandaff.

"I now come to the famous prophecy of the seventy weeks of Daniel, which you exultingly mention as the most wonderful, and, at the same time, the most incontrovertible prediction in existence, one which never can fail to confound the most perverse unbeliever. If I prove that so far from being the surprising prophecy you pretend, it has altogether a different meaning, and can nowise apply to the coming of Christ. I shall think myself fully excused, if I do not go through every individual prediction in the Bible. The passage alluded to is in Daniel, chapter ix. verse 24 to 27, as follows: 'Seventy weeks are determined upon the people, and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the

vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most holy. Know, therefore, and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and build Jerusalem, unto the Messiah, the prince, there shall be seven weeks; and threescore and two weeks the streets shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times. And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself; and the people of the prince shall come, shall destroy the city, and the sanctuary, and the end thereof shall be a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined. And he shall confirm the covenant with many, for one week; and, in the midst of the week, he shall cause the sacrifice and oblation to cease; and for the overspreading of abominations, he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate.'

"This passage is generally applied to the coming of Christ. The seventy weeks are supposed to mean weeks of years, or seven years each. Now, it is evident that it cannot apply to Jesus Christ; for if from going forth of the commandment in the time of Artaxerxes Longimanus, until the coming of the Messiah, there were to be seven weeks or forty-nine years, how does this agree with what follows? 'After three score and two weeks (or three hundred and seventy-four years) shall Messiah be cut off.' And again, 'he shall confirm the covenant with many for a week.' Did then Jesus Christ live four hundred and twenty-three years, or are there two Messiahs predicted? Dr Prideaux acknowledges that some parts of this prophecy are so injudiciously printed in the English translation of the Bible, that they are quite unintelligible; his alteration is in the punctuation, and according to it we read, that, *from the going forth of the commandment to restore and build Jerusalem, to the Messiah, the Prince, shall be seven weeks, and threc-score and two weeks*: and in verse 27, he puts *the half of the week*, instead of *the midst*. The explanation of the prophecy, as thus altered, he gives as follows:—From the commandment given to Ezra by Atexerxes Longimanus, to the accomplishment of it by Nehemiah, forty-nine years, or the first seven weeks; from this accomplishment to the time of Christ's messenger, John the Baptist, sixty-two weeks, or four hundred and thirty-four years; from thence to the beginning of Christ's public ministry, half a week, or three years and a half; in which half week he preached and confirmed the gospel with many—in all, from the going forth of the commandment, till the death of Christ, seventy weeks, or four hundred and ninety years.

In the first place, we confidently assert that Dr Prideaux followed his fancy, not the original Hebrew, when he followed the punctuation. He is, however, justified in the altera-

tion of half of a week; but, granting all, let us see how it applies. Did the Messiah come after seven weeks from the commandment of Artaxerxes Longimanus? The explanation only says, that Nehemiah finished the work which Ezra began. What has this to do with the Messiah coming at the end of the first seven weeks? The prophet says, that after threescore and two weeks, the street and the wall shall be built. Again, and previously, that after the commandment for the city to be built the Messiah shall come in seven weeks. The learned divine, on the contrary, makes Daniel say, that John the Baptist began to preach the kingdom of the Messiah sixty-nine weeks after the commandment, and in the first seven weeks he talks of nothing but building the temple. Again, how does the oblation cease in half a week? In fact, the same objection occurs here as to the passage as it is written in our Bibles. Daniel speaks quite clear, when he says that "from the going forth of the commandment to restore and build Jerusalem, unto the Messiah, the Prince, shall be seven weeks." If we find, in whatever explanation of the prophecy, that Christ did come forty-nine years after this commandment, and that he did not live four hundred and thirty-four years afterwards, the whole must be an untruth. And, if the first period of seven weeks is united with the threescore and two, that is, if the period of rebuilding the city, and of the coming of the Messiah be the same, then let divines inform us whether this really came to pass, and reconcile it with what follows, in verse 26, that the city is to be destroyed at the same time. Did Christ confirm any covenant with many, for seven years?

"Let us attempt to unriddle this enigma. The passage evidently talks of two Messiahs, or makes one live upwards of four hundred years; and is altogether unintelligible as it stands. For the better understanding of it, I shall quote some previous part of the same chapter, verse 1—"In the first year of Darius, the son of Ahasuerus, of the seed of the Medes, which was made king over the realm of the Chaldeans. 2. In the first year of his reign, I, Daniel, understood by books, the number of the years whereof the word of the Lord came to Jeremiah, the prophet, that he would accomplish seventy years in the desolations of Jerusalem. 3. And I set my face unto the Lord God, to seek by prayers and supplications, with fasting, and sackcloth, and ashes. 4. And I prayed unto the Lord my God, and made my confession, and said.' After this follows his prayer, until the 20th verse; and, in the 21st the angel began to unfold a prophecy to Daniel, which begins in verse 24, and he promises to explain the mystery that had so much grieved Daniel, that is, the prophecy of Jeremiah; then follows the passage I have quoted; the alterations I conceive ought to be made then

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reading, of which I now proceed to mention. In verse 25, the sentence stops after the seven weeks, as it is in the English Bible, because in the original we find here the stop *Atnach*. In verse 26, instead of *shall Messiah be cut off?* we ought to read, *the oblation shall cease*. This is the real meaning of the expression in the original, according to Tertullian, Eusebius, and Theodoretus. Eusebius says, *Unctum (vel Christum) nihil aliud esse quam successionem Pontificum, quos unctos nominare S. Literæ consueverunt*. The Hebrew properly signifies *perdetur unctio*. Theodoretus understands by this word, the same as *sacerdotes uncti*. *Excidetur unctus*, signifies the same as *the oblation shall be abolished*; for the verb *excido* does not always signify to kill, but is applied to whatever falls into disuse that was once in practice, or anything that perishes. It is in this sense used in many parts of Kings and Chronicles. Samuel says, *excide de altare*. In Jeremiah, chapter xxxvii. verse 18, the verb is used in the same sense, *non de sacerdotibus Levitis excidetur homo coram me*, which is given in English, 'neither shall the priests, the Levites, want a man (or cease to have a man) before me.' In verse 27, 'and he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week,' means no more than the exemption of calamities, and is tantamount to, *he shall let many remain in peace*, as in Genesis, chapter vi. verse 18, it is used in this sense.

"To understand the real meaning of this pretended prophecy, the reader will remember that Daniel mourned for the seventy weeks of captivity prophesied by Jeremiah; the vision of Daniel took place in the first year of Darius, King of Chaldea; that is, in the year 162 of Nebuchadnezzar; but, in chapter x. of Daniel, we learn that he ate no pleasant bread, neither came flesh and wine into his mouth, till three whole weeks were fulfilled. Now, the term weeks is used in the Bible indiscriminately for weeks of years, or of days; here it appears clear it signifies the former, particularly as the whole relates to the seventy years of Jeremiah; and the angel, in chap. x. verse 14, tells Daniel, in the same figurative style, 'Now, I am come to make thee understand what shall befall thy people in the latter days, for yet the vision is for many days.' If then Daniel wept three weeks of years, or twenty-one years, from the destruction of the temple, in the year 141 to the time of the vision in 162 (the angel, chapter x. verse 3, says, that the prince of Persia withstood him 21 days or years,) it is easy to see what Daniel means. Jeremiah had prophesied a captivity of 70 years, 'of these, three weeks or 21 years were past; therefore, Daniel, after entreating God to tell him how many more years were wanting,' received for an answer what follows:—'At the beginning of thy supplications, the commandment came forth, and I am come to show thee.'

—'Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people to seal up the vision and prophecy,' that is, to complete the prophecy of Jeremiah; and we find, therefore, that the issuing the commandment to restore the Jews, and to build Jerusalem, or more properly from the revelation of the angel, (*exitu verbi*), promising that Jerusalem should be rebuilt, verse twenty-three, to the coming of the Messiah, the Prince, or Cyrus, who freed the Jews from the captivity, there were to be seven weeks, or forty-nine years, which, added to the three weeks already past, made the 70 years of Jeremiah. Cyrus, is by Isaiah, called the Lord's anointed; 'Thus saith the Lord to his anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have holden, to subdue nations before him for Jacob my servant's sake.' Cyrus gave, at that time, liberty to the Jews, as the reader may see in Ezra. It is evident, that the word commandment cannot mean any express order to build Jerusalem, for the angel says, just before he reveals the prophecy, 'at the beginning of thy supplications the commandment came forth;' we know that Daniel began to address prayers unto heaven, at a time when there was no order to build the temple, on the contrary, the Jews were in captivity.

This is the most difficult part of the pretended prophecy, the remainder is plain. There shall be 62 weeks till the rebuilding of the wall. The writer alludes here to the building of the first temple under Zerubbabel and Jeshua, and then to the rebuilding of the wall, and restoration of the temple by Judas Maccabeus, after its profanation by Antiochus Epiphanes. The period of this last event is by the prophecy made to extend to 63½ weeks, or 44½ years. Let us see if chronology confirms this supposition. The temple was destroyed in the 141st year of Nabuch, or 4107 of the Julian period; add to this 44½ years, or 63 weeks and a half, and we have the year 4551, or the second year of Judas Maccabeus, according to Josephus, who also informs us, that having conquered his enemies, he then built a wall about Sion, which is clearly meant in the words, 'the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times,' 1st Maccabeus, chapter iv. verse 60. 'At that time also they builded up the Mount Sion with high walls,' &c. Troublous the times certainly were; the Jews were fighting against the cruelty of Antiochus Epiphanes. It is certain, then, that after 343 years, or 62 weeks, the wall should be built, and although it was not really completed till about ten weeks after, it is presumable that the loose historian, or prophet, did not choose to alter the beautiful idea of 70 weeks. We know how superstitiously the Jews respected not only the number seven, but all its different affections. We are besides informed, in the first book of Maccabees, that after the first depredation of Antiochus, the

people rebuilt the city of David, and made walls and forts; this happened some years before the building of the wall by Judas, and brings the prediction nearer to historical accuracy.

"The next part of the prophecy is—'And after three score and two weeks shall sacrifices cease;' this means in the course of the week that succeeds the 62. And, no doubt, Antiochus Epiphanes abolished them in the seventh year of his reign, as we read in Maccab. chap. i.—'And the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary.' This Antiochus most certainly did, 'and went up (Antiochus) against Israel and Jerusalem with a great multitude, and entered proudly into the sanctuary, and took away the golden altars; also he took the hidden treasures, and there was great mourning in Israel,' 1 Maccab. i. 'And the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations, are determined.' The coming of Antiochus into Jerusalem is pompously detailed in the first book of Maccabees; the Jews compared a great calamity, or an invading and irresistible army, to a flood. Let us proceed with the remainder—"And he shall confirm the covenant with many for a week;" this alludes to the first seven years of the reign of Antiochus during which he did not interfere with the worship of the Jews, although he gave liberty to those who chose to be heathens to follow their respective worship; it was in the end of the sixth, and in the beginning of the seventh year, that he attacked the Jews, destroyed the temple, plundered it of its riches, and made himself the tyrant of Judea.

"The last part of the passage is as follows:—'And in the half of a week he shall cause the oblation and sacrifice to cease;' and I have only to observe, that, from the taking of the city by Antiochus, to the absolute forbidding Jewish worship, there elapsed about three years and a half, or half a week; for he came to Jerusalem in the 143d year of the kingdom of the Greeks, and the erecting of idols was in the year 143; after which he continued to persecute the Jews, and promote idolatry, until the year 145. Now, Antiochus attacked Jerusalem at the end of his sixth year, to which, if we add two years and three months, we have pretty exactly the period of half a week, or three years and a half. The expression, 'the spreading of abominations,' evidently alludes to what is said in Maccabees, chap. i. ver. 54. 'Now the fifteenth day of the month Casleu, in the 145th year, they (the followers of Antiochus) set up the abomination of desolation upon the altar, and builded idol altars throughout the cities of Judah, on every side.' Daniel says, chap. xii. ver. 11. speaking of his vision, 'and from the time that the daily sacrifice shall be taken away, and the abomination that maketh desolate set up, there shall be (that is,

between the first interdict of Antiochus, and the setting up of idols) 1290 days;' which is a little more than three years and a half. The wonderful prophecy is then unriddled; it becomes a contemptible piece of history in an affected style. I trust the explanation which I have given, after Marsham, will appear satisfactory. I challenge Bishop Watson to produce a plausible explanation of the passage according to the sense of the Church. It may not be improper to observe, that Clemens Alexandrinus, many of the fathers, Calmet, and other persons of great knowledge, have flatly denied the application of the weeks of Daniel to Jesus. Those who espouse your cause lose sight of the context of Daniel; they forget chronology, and evince to what a pitch of delusion their minds have arrived.

"This is the famous prophecy that silenced the Jewish rabbins of Venice; it is of a pattern with Daniel's four beasts; the fourth is also a story of Antiochus Epiphanes and Judas who slays the beast. Judas is the son of man coming in clouds; he is the person of whom the prophets speak, and who has most ridiculously been distorted to Jesus Christ. This farrago of prophecies seems to have been the production of Esdras or some very late writer; and I am not sure but the doctrine of the Pythagorean millenium gave rise to some of the expressions in both writers, about the beast—they seem to have sprung from the same origin with those of the Apocalypse; and, with the four Indian horses, they crept among the Jews, together with many other Chaldean mythological ideas; the Ancient of Ancients appears in his fiery car as Osiris triumphant, or Chreeshna conquering Chiven; the books are open before him, as his kingdom is everlasting, like that of Vishnu with the Vedas. But visions so ridiculous as that of Daniel deserve not our consideration; whatever be their source they are but reveries, and may serve to amuse idle people in their ridiculous speculations about the world's end. Like Swedenburgh, men may dream, and interpret their own dreams, and like him have the mortification to be laughed at for the non-accomplishment of their predictions."

Enough has been said respecting the value of the prophecies of Daniel; and as we have now criticised at considerable length the principal prophecies of what are called the greater prophets, we shall be brief in our remaining observations on the predictions of their lesser brethren.

(To be concluded in next No.)

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THE PROPHECIES AND MIRACLES OF THE BIBLE.

We pass over Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, and Haggai, as their prophecies are exceedingly few, referring to local events, and the times in which they are said to have been written, supplying no data to detect their falsehood and misapplication; and shall conclude with a notice of Hosea, Micah, Zechariah, and Malachi, and, though out of order, take Jonah for convenience last:—these having been cited by the priesthood as prognosticators of Jesus Christ. We shall only take up those prophecies supposed to refer to Christianity, as alone furnishing the means of detecting their inaccuracy and misapplication.

Hosea.

There is a passage, the 9th chapter of Hosea, verse 1., referred to in Matthew, chapter ii. 3. 13., as predictory of the flight of Christ, with Joseph and Mary, into Egypt, "that it might be fulfilled (it is said) which was spoken by the prophet, saying, *out of Egypt have I called my son.*" The words of Hosea are these.—"When Israel was a child then I loved him, and called *my son out of Egypt.* As they called them, so they went from them, they sacrificed unto Balaam, and burnt incense to graven images." This passage, distorted to mean Jesus Christ, refers plainly to Israel coming out of Egypt in the time of Pharaoh, and to the idolatry afterwards committed; for the person called out of Egypt means a people called by the collective name Israel, who afterwards sacrificed unto Balaam, and burned incense to graven images." Christ surely could not be this idolator, and, if not, the whole prophecy is exploded.

Micah.

The 5th chap. of this prophet has been trumpeted forth as a most indubitable prophecy of the birth of Christ in Bethlehem. It says, ver. 2d. "But thou, Beth-lehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me, that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting." Matthew, chap. i. purports to quote this passage, though incorrectly, and applies it to the birth of Christ in Bethlehem. It can however, be

easily shown, that the character of Christ does not fulfil the requisite conditions; it is said at the 5th verse of the chap. in Micah, referred to, "And *this man* shall be at peace when the Assyrian shall come into our land, and when he shall tread in our palaces, then shall we raise up against him (that is, against the Assyrians) seven shepherds and eight principal men," ver. 6. "And they shall waste the land of Assyria with the sword, and the land of Nimrod on the entrance thereof; thus shall he (the person spoken of at the head of the 2nd verse) deliver us from the Assyrians, when he cometh into our land, and when he treadeth within our borders."

This evidently applies to a military chief, and cannot mean Christ. The circumstances of the times spoken of, and those of the times in which Christ lived, are in contradiction to each other. It was the Romans, and not the Assyrians, that *were in the land of Judea, and trod in their palaces*, at the time Christ is said to have been born and died; and so far from his driving them out, it was under them that he suffered death, and they remained afterwards in the possession of the land. The facts, therefore, completely falsify the prophecy if it is meant to apply to Christ.

Zechariah.

The 9th chap. of Zechariah contains a passage which Matthew xxi. v. 1, 2, 3 and 4, mentions; it is about some person riding on an ass. The prophet says, "Rejoice greatly O daughter of Zion; shout O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy king cometh unto thee: he is just and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass." The words of Matthew, descriptive of the entrance of Christ into Jerusalem, are—"All this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, tell ye the daughter of Zion, behold thy king cometh unto thee, meek, and sitting on an ass, and a colt the foal of an ass."

The passage in Zachariah appears to be only a kind of rhapsody in congratulation of his countrymen on their returning from the captivity at Babylon; for nearly his whole book has reference to this great event. Zachariah

begins the first chapter of his book with several conceits of joy on getting back to Jerusalem. He says at the 8th verse, "I saw by night, and behold a man sitting on a *red horse* (a rather strange colour for a steed), and he stood among the myrtle trees that were in the bottom, and behind him were *red horses, speckled, and white.*" Having described these curious coloured horses, he introduces an angel among them, with whom he gets into conversation about the joyful affair of getting back to Jerusalem, and he saith at the 16th verse, "Therefore, thus saith the Lord, *I am returned to Jerusalem with mercies; my house shall be built in it, saith the Lord of hosts, and a line shall be stretched forth upon Jerusalem.*" An expression having reference to building the city. These will show that Zachariah's mind was taken up with the entry of the Jews into Jerusalem, and not with the entry of Christ seven hundred years afterwards. Besides, representing a king riding on an ass was nothing extraordinary, any more than to be riding on a horse in this country at the present day; for asses in that country were generally used for riding, especially among the principal men.

Zachariah, in speaking of any one riding into the city, must have placed them on the back of an ass as being the principal animal of the country for such purpose; and the prophecy is applicable to thousands of other persons that may have thus ridden into Jerusalem as well as to Christ. To all appearance, Zachariah's rhapsody about a king riding into Jerusalem on an ass, refers strictly to the resurrection of Judea as a kingdom, and to the establishment of its power under a king or ruler, who, as symbolical of this resurrection, might thus be represented riding into the city on an ass, the animal used by all the wealthier Jews. And this is the sense the Jews, who ought to understand their own books better than any Christian, have attached to it.

Besides, there is good ground for rejecting as untrue the story of Christ riding into Jerusalem with a great multitude shouting and rejoicing, and spreading their garments by the way; for previous to this, Jesus is represented running away, or withdrawing himself from Jerusalem, for fear of being apprehended; but here, though no new circumstance had risen in the interim to change his condition for the better, he makes a public entry into that city he had fled from for safety. These two circumstances are beyond the bounds of probability, and if both are not false, one of them at least can scarcely be true.

Another prophecy of Zachariah is employed as prognosticatory of the betrayal of Christ for thirty pieces of silver; it is contained in chap. xi. verse 7 to 14 inclusive:—"And I will feed the flock of slaughter, even you, O poor of the flock. And I took unto me two staves; the one I called Beauty, and the other I called

Bands; and I fed the flock. Three shepherds also I cut off in one month; and my soul loathed them, and their soul also abhorred me. Then said I, I will not feed you: that that dieth, let it die; and that that is to be cut off, let it be cut off; and let the rest eat every one the flesh of another. And I took my staff, even Beauty, and cut it asunder, that I might break my covenant which I made with all the people. And it was broken in that day; and so the poor of the flock that waited upon me knew that it was the word of the Lord. And I said unto them, if ye think good, give me my price; and if not forbear. So they weighed for my price thirty pieces of silver. And the Lord said unto me, Cast it into the potter: a goodly price that I was prized at of them. And I took the thirty pieces of silver, and cast them to the potter in the house of the Lord. Then I cut asunder mine other staff, even Bands, that I might break the brotherhood between Judah and Israel." No part of this incoherent story has any relation to what is stated in Matthew, but quite the reverse. In Zechariah the *thirty pieces* of silver, whatever it was for, is called a *goodly price*, and was approved of by the Lord, and the money given to the potter in the house of the Lord, but in the case of Judas, as stated in Matthew, the thirty pieces of silver were the price of blood; the transaction was condemned by the Lord, and the money when refunded, was *refused* admittance into the treasury. Every thing in the two cases is the reverse of each other. Besides, in the Acts of the Apostles, it is stated, that so far from Judas repenting and returning the money, or the high priest buying a field with it to bury strangers in, Judas kept the money and bought a field with it himself, and afterwards fell headlong in it, and burst himself.

Malachi.

Mark commences his book by a passage in which reference is made to the prophets. He says, chap. i. v. 1. "The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ the Son of God, as it is written in the prophets. *Behold I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare the way before thee.*" This refers to Malachi, chap. iii. Having said at verse 1. "Behold I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me," he says in verse 2. "But who may abide the day of his coming; and who shall stand when he appeareth? for he is like a refiner's fire, and like fuller's soap."

This description cannot refer to the birth of Christ and the coming of John the Baptist, for it is a scene of horror and fear that is here described, and the birth of Christ is always spoken of as a time of gladness and rejoicing. Malachi in continuation of the same subject, explains in the next chapter, the nature of the scene, and who the person is whom he calls

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the messenger, of which he has been speaking. He says chap. iv. v. 1. "Behold the day cometh that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, all that do wickedly, shall be stubble; and the day cometh that shall burn them up, saith the Lord of hosts, that shall leave them neither root nor branch," ver. 5. "Behold I will send you Elijah the prophet, before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord."

By what latitude of interpretation can Elijah be made into John the Baptist, and Malachi's dreadful day that is to "burn like an oven," and destroy the wicked like stubble, leaving them "neither root nor branch," be transformed into the birth-day of Christ! It is only by the most unwarrantable distortion that such prophecies as these can be applied to any such events.

We now conclude our review of the Prophets, by a notice of *Jonah*. We do not introduce this prophet on account of any wonderful prediction with which his book abounds, for it is exceedingly barren in this respect; but we introduce him because of his celebrated miraculous voyage, and adventure in the fish's belly, and as a specimen strikingly characteristic of the whole tribe of Jewish prophets and seers. Thomas Paine has a most excellent notice of this personage in his *Age of Reason*, which we cannot do better than place before the reader. He says, "Jonah is represented, first, as a disobedient prophet, running away from his mission, and taking shelter on board a vessel of the Gentiles, bound from Joppa to Tarshish; as if he ignorantly supposed, by such a paltry contrivance, he could hide himself where God could not find him. The vessel is overtaken by a storm at sea; and the mariners all of whom are Gentiles, believing it to be a judgment, on account of some one on board who had committed a crime, agreed to cast lots, to discover the offender; and the lot fell upon Jonah. But before this, they had cast all their wares and merchandise overboard to lighten the vessel, while Jonah, like a stupid fellow, was fast asleep in the hold.

After the lot had designated Jonah to be the offender, they questioned him to know who and what he was? and he told them *he was an Hebrew*; and the story implies, that he confessed himself to be guilty. But these Gentiles, instead of sacrificing him at once, without pity or mercy, as a company of Bible-prophets, or priests, would have done by a Gentile in the same case, and as it is related Samuel had done by Agag, and Moses by the women and children, they endeavoured to save him, though at the risk of their own lives: for the account says, "Nevertheless (that is, though Jonah was a Jew and a foreigner, and the cause of all their misfortunes, and the loss of their cargo,) the men rowed hard to bring the boat to land, but they could not, for the sea wrought, and

was tempestuous against them.' Still, however, they were unwilling to put the fate of lot into execution, and they cried, says the account, unto the Lord, saying, 'We beseech thee, O Lord, let us not perish for this man's life, and lay not upon us innocent blood; for thou, O Lord, has done as it pleased thee.' Meaning thereby, that they did not presume to judge Jonah guilty, since he might be innocent; but that they considered the lot, that had fallen upon him, as a decree of God, or as it *pleased God*. The address of this prayer shows that the Gentiles worshipped *one Supreme Being*, and that they were not idolaters, as the Jews represented them to be. But the storm still continuing, and the danger increasing, they put the fate of the lot into execution, and cast Jonah into the sea; where, according to the story, a great fish swallowed him up whole and alive.

We have now to consider Jonah securely housed from the storm in the fish's belly. Here we are told that he prayed; but the prayer is a made-up prayer, taken from various parts of the Psalms, without connection or consistency, and adapted to the distress, but not at all to the condition that Jonah was in. It is such a prayer as a Gentile, who might know something of the Psalms, could copy out for him. This circumstance alone, were there no other, is sufficient to indicate that the whole is a made-up story. The prayer, however, is supposed to have answered the purpose, and the story goes on, (taking up, at the same time, the cant language of a Bible-prophet,) saying, '*The Lord spake unto the fish, and it vomited out Jonah upon the dry land.*'

Jonah then receives a second mission to Nineveh, with which he sets out; and we have now to consider him as a preacher. The distress he is represented to have suffered, the remembrance of his own disobedience as the cause of it, and miraculous escape he is supposed to have had, were sufficient, one would conceive, to have impressed him with sympathy and benevolence in the execution of his mission; but, instead of this, he enters the city with denunciation and malediction in his mouth, crying, '*Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown.*'

We have now to consider this supposed missionary in the last act of his mission; and here it is that the malevolent spirit of a Bible-prophet, or of a predicting priest, appears in all that blackness of character that men ascribe to the being they call the devil.

Having published his prediction, he withdrew, says the story, to the east side of the city.—But for what? not to contemplate in retirement the mercy of his Creator to himself or others, but to wait, with malignant impatience, the destruction of Nineveh. It came to pass, however, as the story relates, that the Ninevites reformed, and that God, according

to the Bible phrase, repented him of the evil he had said he would do unto them, and did it not. This, saith the first verse of the last chapter, *displeased Jonah exceedingly, and he was very angry.* His obdurate heart would rather that all Nineveh should be destroyed, and every soul, young and old, perish in its ruins, than that his prediction should not be fulfilled. To expose the character of a prophet still more, a gourd is made to grow up in the night, that promises him an agreeable shelter from the heat of the sun, in the place to which he is retired; and the next morning it dies.

Here the rage of the prophet becomes excessive, and he is ready to destroy himself. *'It is better,* said he, *for me to die than to live.'* This brings on a supposed expostulation between the Almighty and the prophet; in which the former says, *'Doe'st thou well to be angry for the gourd? And Jonah said, I do well to be angry, even unto death.* Then said the Lord, *Thou hast had pity on the gourd, for which thou hast not laboured, neither madest it to grow, which came up in a night; and should not I spare Nineveh, that great city, in which are more than three-score thousand persons that cannot discern between their right hand and their left?'*

Here is both the winding up of the satire, and the moral of the fable. As a satire, it strikes against the character of all the Bible-prophets, and against all the indiscriminate judgments upon men, women, and children, with which this lying book, the Bible, is crowded; such as Noah's flood, the destruction of the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah, the extirpation of the Canaanites, even to sucking infants, and women with child; because the same reflection, *that there are more than three-score thousand persons that cannot discern between their right hand and their left,* meaning young children, applies to all their cases. It satirizes also the supposed partiality of the Creator for one nation more than for another.

As a moral, it preaches against the malevolent spirit of prediction; for as certainly as a man predicts ill, he becomes inclined to wish it. The pride of having his judgment right, hardens his heart, till at last he beholds with satisfaction, or sees with disappointment, the accomplishment or the failure of his predictions.—This book ends with the same kind of strong and well-directed point against prophets, prophecies, and indiscriminate judgments, as the chapter that Benjamin Franklin made for the Bible, about Abraham and the stranger, ending against the intolerant spirit of religious persecution. Thus much for the book of Jonah."

From the numerous specimens of Bible prophecy already given, it will be apparent how vague and incoherent they are, and how capable of being twisted by the imagination to suit

almost any purpose; and be it observed, those that have been criticised are by far the best specimens in the whole book; and if the best, it can easily be inferred how lame and silly the remainder of them must be.

But our reasoning has been conducted upon the supposition that the facts narrated in the New Testament, and supposed to be confirmatory of the prophecies of the Old Testament, are strictly true; and hence we have given the scripturists a position they are by no means entitled to, for in our treatises on the Internal and External Evidences, we have shown how unsupported, contradictory, improbable, and unworthy of credit, the statements of events in the books of the Evangelists are. So that, taking this view of the subject, we have not even a rational and authentic case connected with the introduction of Christianity by which to testify the accuracy of any prophecy in the Jewish Scriptures. We have taken the books of the gospel as they are, having no other standard to go by; and have shown, that even with that admission, the Old Testament prophecies must be abandoned as untenable and inapplicable to the events with which they have been connected.

We dismiss the subject of prophecy by quoting the very excellent observations of Thomas Paine on the general character of the Bible prophets:—

"According to the modern meaning of the word prophet and prophesying, it signifies foretelling events to a great distance of time; and it became necessary to the inventors of the gospel to give it this latitude of meaning, in order to apply, or to scratch, what they call the prophecies of the Old Testament to the times of the New. But according to the Old Testament, the prophesying of the seer, and afterwards of the prophet, so far as the meaning of the word seer was incorporated into that of prophet, had reference only to things of the time then passing, or very closely connected with it; such as the event of a battle they were going to engage in, or of a journey, or of an enterprise they were going to undertake, or of any circumstance then pending, or of any difficulty they were then in; all of which had immediate reference to themselves, (as in the case already mentioned of Ahaz and Isaiah with respect to the expression *Behold a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son*) and not to any distant future time. It was that kind of prophesying that corresponds to what we call fortune-telling; such as casting nativities, predicting riches, fortunate or unfortunate marriages, conjuring for lost goods, &c. and it is the fraud of the Christian church, not that of the Jews, and the ignorance and the superstition of modern, not that of ancient times, that elevated those poetical-musical-conjuring-dreaming-strolling gentry into the rank they have since had.

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"But besides this general character of all the prophets, they had a particular character. They were in parties, and they prophesied for, or against, according to the party they were with, as the poetical and political writers of the present day write in defence of the party they associate with, against the other.

"After the Jews were divided into two nations, that of Judah and that of Israel, each party had its prophets, who abused and accused each other of being false prophets, lying prophets, impostors, &c.

"The prophets of the party of Judah prophesied against the prophets of the party of Israel; and those of the party of Israel against those of Judah. This party-prophesying showed itself immediately on the separation of the first two rival kings, Rehoboam and Jeroboam. The prophet that cursed or prophesied against the altar that Jeroboam had built in Bethel, was of the party of Judah, where Rehoboam was king; and he was waylaid on his return home by a prophet of the party of Israel, who said unto him, (1 Kings, xiii.) 'Art thou the man of God that came from Judah? and he said, I am.' Then the prophet of the party of Israel said to him, 'I am a prophet also as thou art, (signifying of Judah,) and an angel spake unto me by the word of the Lord, saying, Bring him back with thee unto thine house, that he may eat bread and drink water; but (says the 18th verse) he lied unto him.' The event, however, according to the story, is, the prophet of Judah never got back to Judah; for he was found dead on the road by the contrivance of the prophet of Israel, who, no doubt, was called a true prophet by his own party, and the prophet of Judah a lying prophet."

MIRACLES.

The subject of miracles, as intimately connected with that of prophecy, next commands attention; and as our object is to furnish the best information on all subjects brought forward for discussion, we subjoin the popular definition of a miracle by Voltaire, as being the clearest and most concise we have seen on the subject:—

"A miracle," says the witty French philosopher, "according to the true meaning of the word, is something admirable; and agreeably to this, all is miracle. The stupendous order of nature, the revolution of a hundred millions of worlds round a million of suns, the activity of light, the life of animals, all are grand and perpetual miracles.

"According to common acceptance, we call a miracle the violation of these divine and eternal laws. A solar eclipse at the time of the full moon, or a dead man walking two leagues and carrying his head in his arms, we denominate a miracle."

Having given this definition of a miracle, Voltaire, in his sly and cutting style, goes on to say—

"Many natural philosophers maintain, that in this sense there are no miracles; and advance the following arguments—

"A miracle is the violation of mathematical, divine, immutable, eternal laws. By the very exposition itself, a miracle is a contradiction in terms: a law cannot at the same time be immutable and violated. But they are asked, cannot a law, established by God himself, be suspended by its author?

"They reply that it cannot; and that it is impossible a being infinitely wise can have made laws to violate them. He could not, they say, derange the machine but with a view of making it work better; but it is evident that God, all-wise and omnipotent, originally made this immense machine, the universe, as good and perfect as he was able; if he saw that some imperfections would arise from the nature of matter, he provided for that in the beginning, and, accordingly he will never change anything in it.

"Moreover, God can do nothing without reason; but what reason could induce him to disfigure for a time his own work?

"It is done, they are told, in favour of mankind. They reply, we must presume, then, that it is in favour of all mankind; for it is impossible to conceive, that the divine nature should occupy itself only about a few men in particular, and not for the whole human race; and even the whole human race itself is a very small concern; it is less than a small ant-hill, in comparison with all the beings inhabiting immensity. But is it not the most absurd of extravagances to imagine, that the Infinite Supreme should, in favour of three or four hundred emmets on their little heap of earth, derange the operation of the vast machinery that moves the universe?

"But admitting that God chose to distinguish a small number of men by particular favours, is there any necessity that, in order to accomplish this object, he should change what he established for all periods and for all places? He certainly can have no need of this inconstancy in order to bestow favours on any of his creatures: his favours consist in his laws themselves: he has foreseen all and arranged all, with a view to them. All invariably obey the force which he has impressed for ever on nature.

"For what purpose would God perform a miracle? To accomplish some particular design upon living beings! He would then in reality be supposed to say: I have not been able to effect by my construction of the universe, by my divine decrees, by my eternal laws, a particular object; I am now going to change my eternal ideas and immutable laws, to endeavour to accomplish what I have not been able to do by means of them. This would be an avowal of his weakness, not of his power; it would appear in such a being an inconceivable

able contradiction. Accordingly, therefore, to dare to ascribe miracles to God is, if man can in reality insult God, actually offering him that insult. It is saying to him, 'You are a weak and inconsistent being.' It is therefore absurd to believe in miracles; it is in fact dishonouring the divinity."*

Another writer and cotemporary of Voltaire has likewise most logically and successfully refuted the orthodox notions of miracles—a writer combining in a high degree profundity of judgment, with great clearness and elegance of expression—qualities which he has rendered eminently successful in destroying a belief in those monstrosities. The arguments against the possibility of miracles is more powerfully yet concisely stated, in his "Essay on Miracles," than by any other writer in this, or perhaps any other language. The following is a summary of his principal objections, against these violations of the laws of nature:—

"A miracle is a violation of the laws of nature; and as a firm and unalterable experience has established these laws, the proof against a miracle, from the very nature of the fact, is as entire as any argument from experience can possibly be imagined. Why is it more than probable, that all men must die; that lead cannot of itself remain suspended in the air; that fire consumes wood, and is extinguished by water; unless it be, that these events are found agreeable to the laws of nature, and there is required a violation of these laws, or in other words, a miracle to prevent them? Nothing is esteemed a miracle, if it ever happen in the common course of nature. It is no miracle that a man seemingly in good health should die on a sudden; because such a kind of death, though more unusual than any other, has yet been frequently observed to happen. But it is a miracle that a dead man should come to life; because that has never been observed in any age or country. There must, therefore, be a uniform experience against every miraculous event, otherwise the event would not merit that appellation. And as an uniform experience amounts to a proof, there is here a direct and full proof from the nature of the fact against the existence of any miracle; nor can such a proof be destroyed, or the miracle rendered credible, but by an opposite proof, which is superior.

"The plain consequence is (and it is a general maxim worthy of our attention), 'that no testimony is sufficient to establish a miracle, unless the testimony be of such a kind, that its falsehood would be more miraculous than the fact which it endeavours to establish; and even in that case there is a mutual destruction of arguments, and the superior only gives us an assurance suitable to that degree of force which remains after deducting the inferior.' When any one tells me, that he saw a dead man re-

stored to life, I immediately consider with myself, whether it may be more probable that this person should either deceive or be deceived, or that the fact which he relates should really have happened. I weigh the one miracle against the other; and according to the superiority which I discover, I pronounce my decision, and always reject the greater miracle. If the falsehood of his testimony would be more miraculous than the event which he relates; then, and not till then, can he pretend to command my belief or opinion.

"In the foregoing reasoning, we have supposed that the testimony upon which a miracle is founded, may possibly amount to an entire proof, and that the falsehood of that testimony would be a real prodigy; but it is easy to show, that we have been a great deal too liberal in our concession, and that there never was a miraculous event established on so full an evidence.

"First, there is not to be found, in all history, any miracle attested by a sufficient number of men of such unquestioned good sense, education, and learning, as to secure us against all delusion in themselves; of such undoubted integrity, as to place them beyond all suspicion of any design to deceive others; of such credit and reputation in the eyes of mankind, as to have a great deal to lose in case of their being detected in any falsehood; and, at the same time, attesting facts performed in such a public manner, and in so celebrated a part of the world, as to render the detection unavoidable: all which circumstances are requisite to give us a full assurance in the testimony of men.

"Secondly, we may observe in human nature a principle, which, if strictly examined, will be found to diminish extremely the assurance which we might, from human testimony, have in any kind of prodigy. The maxim, by which we commonly conduct ourselves in our reasonings, is, that the objects, of which we have no experience, resemble those of which we have; that what we have found to be most usual is always most probable; and that where there is an opposition of arguments, we ought to give the preference to such as are founded on the greatest number of past observations: but though in proceeding by this rule, we readily reject any fact which is unusual and incredible in an ordinary degree; yet in advancing farther, the mind observes not always the same rule; but when anything is affirmed utterly absurd and miraculous, it rather the more readily admits of such a fact, upon account of that very circumstance which ought to destroy all its authority. The passion of *surprise* and *wonder*, arising from miracles, being an agreeable emotion, gives a sensible tendency towards the belief of those events from which it is derived. And this goes so far, that even those who cannot enjoy this pleasure immediately, nor can believe those miraculous events of which they are informed, yet love to partake of the satis-

* David Hume.

faction at second-hand or by rebound, and place a pride and delight in exciting the admiration of others.

"The many instances of forged miracles and prophecies, and supernatural events, which, in all ages, have either been detected by contrary evidence, or which detect themselves by their absurdity, prove sufficiently the strong propensity of mankind to the extraordinary and the marvellous, and ought reasonably to beget a suspicion against all relations of this kind. This is our natural way of thinking, even with regard to the most common and most credible events. For instance, there is no kind of report which rises so easily, and spreads so quickly, especially in country places and provincial towns, as those concerning marriages: insomuch that two young persons of equal condition never see each other twice, but the whole neighbourhood immediately join them together. The pleasure of telling a piece of news so interesting, of propagating it, and of being the first reporters of it, spreads the intelligence. And this is so well known, that no man of sense gives attention to these reports, till he find them confirmed by some greater evidence. Do not the same passions, and others still stronger, incline the generality of mankind to believe and report, with the greatest vehemence and assurance, all religious miracles?"

"Thirdly, It forms a strong presumption against all supernatural and miraculous relations, that they are observed chiefly to abound among ignorant and barbarous nations; or if a civilized people has ever given admission to any of them, that people will be found to have received them from ignorant and barbarous ancestors, who transmitted them with that inviolable sanction any authority which always attend received opinions. When we peruse the first histories of all nations, we are apt to imagine ourselves transported into some new world; where the whole frame of nature is disjointed, and every element performs its operations in a different manner from what it does at present. Battles, revolutions, pestilence, famine, and death, are never the effect of those natural causes which we experience. Prodigious, omens, oracles, judgments, quite obscure the few natural events that are intermingled with them. But as the former grow thinner every page, in proportion as we advance nearer the enlightened ages, we soon learn that there is nothing mysterious or supernatural in the case, but that all proceeds from the usual propensity of mankind towards the marvellous; and that though this inclination may at intervals receive a check from sense and learning, it can never be thoroughly extirpated from human nature.

"It is strange, a judicious reader is apt to say, upon the perusal of these wonderful historians, that such prodigious events never happen in our days. But it is nothing strange, I hope, that men should lie in all ages. You must

surely have seen instances enow of that frailty. You have yourself heard many such marvellous relations started, which, being treated with scorn by all the wise and judicious, have at last been abandoned even by the vulgar. Be assured, that those *renowned lies, which have spread and flourished to such a monstrous height, arose from like beginnings*; but being sown in a proper soil, shot up at last into prodigies almost equal to those which they relate."

We have now stated the general reasoning against miracles, which, of course, applies with equal force to those of the Bible, as to those of other systems; but as there may be some parties still unsatisfied with respect to the falsehood of the Christian miracles, we shall endeavour to show from the character of the principal miracles, ascribed to Christ, that it does not require much refined philosophy, or abstruse reasoning, to prove their absurdity; and that too, by no such general arguments as those employed by Voltaire or Hume, but by the inherent absurdities and difficulties with which they can be shown to abound.

No writer in modern times has so daringly opposed the miracles of Christ, taken in the literal sense, as Thomas Woolston;—and his objections come with double force, as he avowed himself a Christian while making his attack. He endeavoured to interpret the gospel in a typical, allegorical, and spiritual sense, and boldly maintained that not one of the miracles of Jesus was actually performed, and this he proceeds to make good from the difficulties and absurdities which he shows to be connected with the literal interpretation, and to which we now call attention.

After giving his allegorical interpretation, he goes on to assert that, when Jesus sent the devils into the herd of swine, he did neither more nor less than commit a robbery on the owner. If the story had been told of Mahomet, he would have been considered "a wizard, an enchanter, or dealer in familiar spirits—a sworn slave to the devil." And if the proprietors of the swine, and the merchants, who, in the outer court of the temple, sold beasts for sacrifice, and whom Jesus drove out with a scourge, came to demand justice when he was apprehended, it was clear he was deservedly condemned, as there never was a jury in England that would not have found him guilty.*

He asserts that, representing Christ telling the woman of Samaria about her having had five husbands, and being then living in adultery, is just making him a wandering gypsy or Bohemian fortune-teller.† If true, this alone was sufficient to cause his banishment, which was the punishment inflicted on diviners or fortune-tellers by Tiberius. "I much wonder," says he, that our gypsies don't account them-

* Woolston on Miracles, Discourse 1st, p. —39.

† Discourse 2d, p. 51.

selves the genuine disciples of Jesus, being endowed with the like gifts, and exercising no worse arts than he himself practised.*

He compares Jesus, when tempted by the devil, to St Dunstan, who, seized the devil by the nose; and he gives the preference to St Dunstan, for, instead of parleying with him, says he, "if Jesus had taken him by the collar and thrust him into his dungeon and there chained him, and closed hell's gates upon him, I appeal to honest Christians whether such a Herculean labour would not have pleased them well."†

"At the article of the fig tree, which was cursed with barrenness for not producing figs out of season, he describes Jesus as a mere vagabond,‡ a mendicant friar, who, before he turned field-preacher was 'no better than a journeyman carpenter.'" "It is surprising, he says, that the court of Rome has not among all its relics some little fancy-box or three-foot stool of his workmanship." In a word, it is difficult to carry ridicule farther.

After diverting himself with the probationary fish-pool of Bethesda, the waters of which were troubled or stirred once in every year by an angel, he enquires "how it could well be, that neither Flavius Josephus nor Philo should ever mention this angel; why St John should be the sole historian of this miracle; and by what other miracle it happened that no Roman ever saw this angel,§ or ever even heard his name mentioned?"

The water changed into wine at the marriage feast in Cana, according to him, ought to excite the laughter of all that are not embruted by superstition.

"What (says he) John expressly says that the guests were already intoxicated, '*methu toti*'; and God comes down to earth and performs his first miracle, to enable them to drink still more. Whether Jesus and his mother were drunk, as were others of the company, is not certain. The familiarity of the lady with a soldier implies that she was fond of her bottle; and her son, however, was somewhat affected by the wine, from his answering his mother so waspishly and snappishly as he did, when he said, "Woman, what have I to do with thee?" It may be inferred from these words that Mary was not a virgin, and that Jesus was not her son. Had it been otherwise, he would not have thus insulted his father and mother in violation of one of the most sacred commandments of the law. However, he complies with his mother's request; he fills eighteen jars with water, and makes punch of it."¶ These are the very words of Thomas Woolston—no unbeliever in Christianity has said stronger things against the miracles, than this professor of the faith.

"It is to the dead raised again by Jesus Christ that he principally directs his attention. He contends that a dead man restored to life would have been an object of attention and astonishment to the universe; that all the Jewish magistracy, and more especially Pilate, would have made the most minute investigations and obtained the most authentic depositions; that Tiberius enjoined all proconsuls, prætors, and governors of provinces to inform him with exactness of every event that took place; that Lazarus, who had been dead four whole days, would have been most strictly interrogated; and that no little curiosity would have been excited to know what had become, during that time, of his soul."

"With what eager interest would Tiberius and the whole Roman senate have questioned him, and not indeed only him, but the daughter of Jairus and the son of the widow of Naim? Three dead persons restored to life would have been three attestations to the divinity of Jesus, which almost in a single moment would have made the whole world christian. But, instead of all this, the whole world, for more than two hundred years, knew nothing about these resplendent and decisive evidences. It is not till a hundred years have rolled away from the date of the events, that some obscure individuals show one another the writings that contain the relation of those miracles. Eighty-nine emperors, reckoning those who had only the name of 'tyrants,' never hear the slightest mention of these resurrections, although they must inevitably have held all nature in amazement. Neither the Jewish historian, Josephus, nor the learned Philo, nor any Greek or Roman historian at all notices these prodigies. In short, Woolston has the imprudence to say, that the history of Lazarus is so brimful of absurdities that St John, when he wrote it, had outlived his senses."*

"He opposes the incarnation, the resurrection, and the ascension of Jesus Christ, just upon the same system;† and he calls, these miracles—"The most manifest and the most barefaced imposture that ever was put upon the world!"

We now close our notice of the Prophecies and Miracles, and general review of the evidences of Christianity. The objections brought forward will require volumes of clerical sophistry to furnish even the shadow of a reply; to refute them satisfactorily is impossible. The next Number will commence the history and progress of Free-Thinking.

* Dis. 2d. p. 33. † Dis. 6th, p. 27.

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* Discourse 2d, p. 52. † Discourse 2d, p. 66.
‡ Dis. 3d, p. 34 to 43. § Disc. 3d, p. 5 to 8.
¶ Discourse iv. p. 31.

FREE-THINKERS' INFORMATION FOR THE PEOPLE.

"LET ALL HAVE FULL LIBERTY TO TEACH AND MAINTAIN WHATEVER OPINIONS THEY
MAY CHOOSE."—*Melancthon.*

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THE STRUGGLES OF PHILOSOPHY WITH SUPERSTITION AND PRIESTCRAFT,
ILLUSTRATED IN THE HISTORY OF FREE INQUIRY.

ARTICLE I.—ANCIENT GREECE.

A most important task is now before us; no less than to exhibit in a clear and consecutive view, the origin and progress of liberal opinions—that ardent inquiry after truth, which neither penalties, dungeons, nor death, could quench, as exhibited in the records of society; and those continual endeavours to shackle the human mind, and to stay the march of intellect characteristic of the past and present proceedings of the various religions of the world. Unfortunately for hitherto degraded humanity, there is no scarcity of material for the task allotted—no want of instances illustrative of the baneful spirit of superstition, and the difficulties attendant on free and honest inquiry. In our selection of facts we shall be as careful and impartial as possible: studying brevity without the omission of anything useful or necessary to the question, so that our little treatises may be valuable as a fund of reference, on the subjects discussed, to all those who have neither time nor means to study large and expensive works.

The progress of philosophy is the history of the human understanding, laying open the origin of opinions, the changes they have undergone, and their influence on the character of the human race. In it we trace the origin and growth of useful knowledge, as well as the errors which have arisen and been propagated. It also exhibits the origin of solitary truths, from time to time, laying the foundation of future systems, as experience suggested new truths and facts in support and in confirmation of the first. In the darkest epochs of human existence, some rays of truth darted their beams across the gloom, serving as a beacon for succeeding generations; and the collection of those scattered rays into a focus, with a sketch of the clouds that obscured their brilliancy and application, will constitute our present undertaking. The germs of the soundest philosophy of the present day may be traced back to a very early and ignorant period of the human race; and our endeavour shall be to connect the links of the chain of ancient and modern opinions—beginning with Greece, as being the cradle of free inquiry—the

soil where the mind of man first cast off the shackles of priestcraft and superstition, and asserted the dignity of reason, in the persons of some of the best and wisest men that ever lived.

In the early period of her history, Greece, like the countries from whence she derived her religion, and the first rudiments of knowledge—Egypt, India, and Chaldea—was entirely under the influence of superstition. The practice of delivering the doctrines of religion under the garb of fable extensively prevailed; and the little knowledge in existence was completely involved in mysteries and allegories.

The first of the Greeks, who is said to have taught philosophy and the arts, is Prometheus. He is supposed to have been an Egyptian, or a Scythian, who instructed the Greeks in several necessary arts, particularly in the use of fire, for the purpose of smelting metals. He was succeeded by Orpheus, who is represented to have improved the lyre, by increasing the number of its strings from four to seven; to have excelled in various kinds of poetry, and to have possessed great skill in medicine. Of a similar character were Musæus, Thamyris, and Amphion, who combined poetry, philosophy, and religion, and applied these under the Egyptian system of allegory for the government of the Greeks. The lives of these parties are so mixed with fables as to be of very little value in a historical point of view. In those times the art of writing was unknown—tradition being the only form of transmitting events, and everything in the shape of instruction took the form of religion; hence the absence of written records, and the mysteries and wonders associated with the early history of Greece. The age in which the parties referred to, flourished, has therefore been called the fabulous period of Greek history.

We have no precise information respecting the progress of the human mind, until after the time Greece came in possession of regular forms of government, as then the division of labour and the classification of society, with improvements in

trade and agriculture, afforded opportunities to many for philosophical investigation, which could not be had in a cruder form of society. It was under Solon that Athens, the most important of the Grecian republics, acquired those institutions and laws to which Greece was afterwards indebted for so much of her literary and philosophical greatness, and which, no doubt, exercised a powerful moral influence over all the other petty states that made up the Greek confederation. Solon has left us no written documents, and all we know of his opinions is from the institutions he established at Athens. Having been appointed Archon in the third year of the fifty-six Olympiad, (594 before the Christian era,) with the united powers of supreme legislator and magistrate, he began to work out a complete reformation. He cancelled the debts owing by poor debtors to rich creditors, which had been the source of much dissension, and declared that the body of a debtor could not be taken as security. He made a new distribution of the people, instituted new courts of judicature, which afterwards became the basis of the laws of the twelve tables in Rome, and carried out other salutary reforms. Such circumstances as these, combined with the active and inquiring character of the Grecian intellect, led the way to that boldness and ingenuity of speculation, and that inquiry into the principles of Nature which distinguished the schools of the "Land of Gods and God-like men," and which it is our business to notice in the present treatise.

Philosophy, up to the times of Thales and Pythagoras, who were cotemporaries, was made up of traditionary opinions and sententious wisdom; but under these celebrated men it passed to more accurate speculation and reasonings.

Thales was born at Miletus in the first year of the thirty-fifth Olympiad. He was descended from Phœnician parents, who had left their country, and settled at Miletus.* The wealth which he inherited, and his own superior abilities, raised him to distinction among his countrymen, so that he was early employed in public affairs. He chose to continue in a state of celibacy, that he might avoid parental anxieties, and that he might be the more at liberty to apply himself to the study of philosophy. So great was his love of science, that he very soon resigned every other occupation, and devoted himself to learning. He travelled to Crete, and afterwards to Egypt, in search of wisdom. Several writers affirm that he was indebted for all his knowledge of philosophy and mathematics to the priests of Memphis. But it is probable that he was more indebted to his own ingenuity than to their instructions; for whilst he was among them he taught them, to their great astonishment, how to measure the height of their pyramids.† It cannot be supposed

that Thales could acquire much mathematical knowledge from a people unable to solve this easy problem. Returning to Miletus with a high degree of reputation for wisdom and learning, Thales became an object of general attention among his countrymen, and his acquaintance was solicited by all those who were desirous of improving in knowledge, or ambitious of being ranked among philosophers. These engagements did not, however, hinder him from prosecuting his mathematical, astronomical, and metaphysical studies; and though his attainments may be thought inconsiderable when they are compared with those of later times, it should be remembered that the first truths in science are the most important, and that great respect is due to those who discovered them. With so much ardour did Thales devote himself to science, that in order to become free from every avocation, he gave up the care of his estate to his nephew. His close attention to his studies, and his acquaintance with nature, have given occasion to several tales which deserve little credit, among which may be reckoned the story of his falling into a pit while he was gazing at the stars. He lived to the great age of ninety years, and died, through mere infirmity, whilst he was attending the Olympic games.*

Thales was not only famous for his knowledge of nature and his mathematical learning, but for his moral and political wisdom. Many ingenious aphorisms and precepts are ascribed to him, of which the following are a specimen:—

Health of body, a competent fortune, and a cultivated mind, are the chief sources of happiness. Parents may expect from their children that obedience which they themselves paid to their parents. Take more pains to correct the blemishes of the mind than those of the face. Stop the mouth of slander by prudence. Be careful not to do that yourself which you blame in another.†

Thales held that the first principle of natural bodies, or the first simple substance from which all things in this world are formed, is water.‡ By this he could not mean to assert that water is the efficient cause of the formation of bodies, but merely that this is the element from which they are produced. It is probable, that by the term—water, Thales meant to express the same idea which the cosmogonists expressed by the word—chaos, the notion annexed to which, was, a turbid and muddy mass, from which all things were produced. Concerning the grounds of his opinion we have no satisfactory informa-

* Laert. Plut. Plac. Phil. 1. i. c. 3. ct Solon. Platon. Eheat. Pausanias in Phocis, c. 5. Arist. Pol. 1. i. c. 11. Plin. Hist. N. xvii. 20. Cyril. contr. Jul. 1. i. p. 15.

† Laert. Stobæi Serm. 203. Auson, p. 112.

‡ Arist. Met. 1. i. c. 3. Laert. 1. i. sect. 27. Plut. Pl. Ph. 1. i. c. 7. Cic. de Nat. D. 1. i. c. 0.

* Laert. 1. i. sect. 21, &c.

† Laert. Plut. 1. c.

tion. The reasons which have been given, such as that all animals and plants are produced and supported by moisture, and the sun and other celestial fires are nourished by vapours,* are mere conjectures, which were perhaps never thought of by Thales.

Concerning the material world, Thales taught that night existed before day; a doctrine which he probably borrowed from the Grecian theogonies, which placed Night, or Chaos, among the first divinities. He held that the stars are fiery bodies; that the moon is an opaque body illuminated by the sun; and that the earth is a spherical body placed in the middle of the universe.

Astronomical as well as mathematical science seems to have received considerable improvements from Thales. He was so well acquainted with the celestial motions as to be able to predict an eclipse, though probably with no great degree of accuracy with respect to time; for Herodotus, who relates this fact, only says that he foretold the year in which it would happen.† He taught the Greeks the division of the heavens into five zones, and the solstitial and equinoctial points, and approached so near to the knowledge of the true length of the solar revolution, that he corrected their calendar, and made their year contain 365 days.‡

These few particulars, respecting the scientific discoveries and improvements of Thales, gives us no unfavourable idea of the abilities and attainments of the father of the Grecian philosophy.

The seeds sown by Thales were diligently cultivated by ANAXIMANDER, who first taught philosophy in a public school. He was born in the third year of the forty-second Olympiad.|| Cicero calls him the friend and companion of Thales; whence it is probable that he was a native of Miletus. That he was employed in instructing youth, may be inferred from an anecdote related concerning him; that, being laughed at for singing (that is, probably, reciting his verses) ill, he said, "We must endeavour to sing better, for the sake of the boys." Anaximander was the first who laid aside the defective method of oral tradition, and committed the principles of natural science to writing. It is related of him, that he predicted an earthquake; but that he should have been able in the infancy of knowledge to do what is, at this day, beyond the reach of philosophy, is incredible. He lived sixty-four years.§

The general doctrine of Anaximander, concerning nature and the origin of things, was that infinity is the first principle of all things, that the universe, though variable in its parts, as one whole is immutable; and that all things are produced from Infinity, and terminate in it. What this philosopher meant by infinity has been the subject of much controversy; and the dispute has produced many ingenious conjectures, which are, however, too feebly supported to merit particular notice.

There can be little doubt that mathematics and astronomy were indebted to Anaximander. He framed a connected series of geometrical truths, and wrote a summary of his doctrine. He was the first who undertook to delineate the surface of the earth, and mark the divisions of land and water upon an artificial globe.*

ANAXAGORAS belonged to the same school, the Ionic, and was born in the first year of the seventieth Olympiad,† he was a disciple of Anaximenes. He inherited from his parents a patrimony, which might have secured him independence and distinction at home; but such was his thirst after knowledge, that about the twentieth year of his age he left his country, without taking proper precautions concerning his estate, and went to reside at Athens. Here he diligently applied himself to the study of eloquence and poetry, and was particularly conversant with the works of Homer, whom he admired as the best perceptor, not only in writing, but in morals. Engaging afterwards in speculations concerning nature, the fame of the Milesian school induced him to leave Athens, that he might attend upon the public instructions of Anaximenes. Under him he became acquainted with his doctrines, and those of his predecessors, concerning natural bodies and the origin of things. So ardently did he engage in these inquiries, that he said concerning himself that he was born to contemplate the heavens. Visiting his native city, he found that, whilst he had been busy in the pursuit of knowledge, his estate had run to waste; upon which he remarked, that to this ruin he owed his prosperity. Among his pupils were several eminent men, particularly the tragedian Euripides, and the orator and statesman Pericles; to whom some add Socrates and Themistocles.

The high degree of reputation which he had acquired at length excited the jealousy and envy of his contemporaries, and brought upon him a cruel persecution. It is generally agreed that he was thrown into prison, and condemned to death; and it was with difficulty that Pericles obtained from his judge the milder sentence of fine and banishment; but the nature of the charge alleged against him is variously represented. The most

* Laert. i. ii. sect. 3. Strabo, l. i. Plin. c. vii. c. 56. Suidas. Euseb. Præp. Ev. i. x. l. ult.

† B. C. 500.

* Laert. Plut. Arist. l. c. Senec. Quæst. Nat. l. iv. c. 6.

† Herod. l. i. p. 19. Laert. l. i. sect. 23—35. Plut. Pl. Ph. l. ii. c. 12. 24. Apul. FL l. iv. Plin. Hist. N. l. ii. c. 9.

‡ Plut. Laert. l. c. Newton's Chronology, p. 86, Shuckford's Connex. vol. ii. p. 5. Comp. Strabo, l. xvii. p. 806.

|| B. C. 610.

§ Laert. l. ii. sect. 1. Cic. Ac. Qu. l. iv. c. 37. Themistii Orat. 20. Plin. Hist. N. l. ii. x. c. 97.

probable account of the matter is, that his offence was, the propagation of new opinions concerning the gods, and particularly, teaching that the sun is an inanimate fiery substance, and consequently not a proper object of worship. There can be no doubt that Anaxagoras, who was indefatigable in his researches into nature, ventured, on many occasions, to contradict and oppose the vulgar opinions and superstitions. It is related that he ridiculed the Athenian priests for predicting an unfortunate event from the unusual appearance of a ram which had but one horn; and that, to convince the people that there was nothing in the affair which was not perfectly natural, he opened the head of an animal, and showed them that it was so constructed as necessarily to prevent the growth of the other horn. Such offensive freedoms as these were probably the cause of his persecution.

After his banishment, Anaxagoras passed the remainder of his days at Lampsacus, where he employed himself in instructing youth, and obtained great respect and influence among the magistrates and citizens. Through his whole life he appears to have supported the character of a true philosopher. Superior to motives of avarice and ambition, he devoted himself to the pursuits of science, and, in the midst of the vicissitudes of fortune, preserved an equal mind. When one of his friends expressed regret on account of his banishment from Athens, he said, "It is not I who have lost the Athenians, but the Athenians who have lost me." Being asked, just before his death, whether he wished to be carried for interment to Clazomene, his native city, he said, "It is unnecessary, the way to the regions below is every where alike open." In reply to a message sent him, at that time, by the senate of Lampsacus, requesting him to inform them in what manner they might most acceptably express their respect for his memory after his decease, he said, "By ordaining that the day of my death be annually kept as a holiday in all the schools of Lampsacus." His request was complied with, and the custom remained for many centuries. He died about the age of seventy-two years. The inhabitants of Lampsacus expressed their high opinion of his wisdom by erecting a tomb, on which they inscribed this epitaph:—

This tomb great Anaxagoras confines,
Whose mind explored the paths of heav'nly truth.

It is also said that two altars were raised in honour of his memory, one dedicated to Truth, the other to Mind, an appellation which was given him on account of the doctrine which he taught concerning the origin and formation of nature.*

We have in the banishment of Anaxagoras the beginning of that warfare between philosophy and priestcraft, so prolific afterwards of mischief; and in Anaxagoras the commencement of that superiority to vulgar superstition, which marks the beginning of the true era of sound philosophy. The material world was conceived by Anaxagoras to have originated from a confused mass, consisting of different kinds of particles. Having learned in the Ionic school that bodies are composed of minute parts, and having observed in different bodies different, and frequently contrary forms and qualities, he concluded that the primary particles, of which bodies consist, are of different kinds; and that the peculiar forms and properties of each body depend upon the nature of that class of particles of which it is chiefly composed. A bone, for instance, he conceived to be composed of a great number of bony particles, a piece of gold, of golden particles; and thus he supposed bodies of every kind to be regenerated from similar particles, and to assume the character of those particles. This system is thus exhibited, in the language of poetry, by Lucretius:*

With Anaxagoras, great Nature's law
Is similarity; and every compound form
Consists of parts minute, each like the whole;
And bone is made of bone, and flesh of flesh;
And blood, and fire, and earth and massy gold,
Are, in their smallest portions, still the same.

Notwithstanding the difficulties and absurdities which obviously attend this system, the invention of it was a proof of the author's ingenuity, who doubtless had recourse to the notion of similar particles, in hopes of obviating the objections which lay against the doctrine of atoms, as he had received it from Anaximenes.

Several doctrines are ascribed to Anaxagoras which might seem to indicate no inconsiderable knowledge of nature; such as, that the wind is produced by the rarefaction of the air; that the rainbow is the effect of the reflection of the solar rays from a thick cloud, placed opposite to it like a mirror; that the moon is an opaque body, enlightened by the sun, and an habitable region, divided into hills, vales, and waters; that the comets are wandering stars; and that the fixed stars are in a region exterior to those of the sun and moon.

Whilst the philosophers of the Ionic school were, as we have seen, industriously employed in investigating the nature and origin of things, they paid little attention to those subjects in which the happiness of human life is immediately concerned. Too deeply engaged in profound speculations to attend to useful truths, they contented themselves with admiring virtue, and extolling

c. 7. Artist. Rhet. l. ii. c. 23. Joseph. cont. App. i. ii.

* L. i. v. 830, &c.

* Laert. l. ii. c. 6, &c. Suidas. Plato in Hippias Maj. Plut. in Pericle. Cic. Nat. D. l. i. c. 11. Tusc. Q. iii. 28. v. 39. De Orat. l. iii. c. 15. Brut. c. 2. Val. Max. l. vii. c. 2. l. viii.

virtuous actions, without taking the pains to establish the principles, and inculcate the precepts, of sound morality. The merit of correcting this error, and introducing a method of philosophising, which was happily calculated to improve the human mind, and to cherish the virtues of social life, is solely to be ascribed to Socrates; a man whose penetrating judgment, exalted views, and liberal spirit, united with exemplary integrity, and purity of manners, have justly entitled him to that distinction, which by the unanimous suffrage of antiquity he has obtained—the first place among philosophers.

SOCRATES was born at Alopece, a village near Athens, in the fourth year of the seventy-seventh Olympiad.* His parents were of low rank. His father, Sophroniscus, was a statuary, his mother Phænarete, a midwife.† Sophroniscus brought up his son, contrary to his inclination, in his own manual employment; in which Socrates, though his mind was continually aspiring after higher objects, was not unsuccessful. Whilst he was a young man, he is said to have formed statues of the habited Græces, which were allowed a place in the citadel of Athens.‡ Upon the death of his father, he was left with no other inheritance than the small sum of eighty *minæ*,§ which, through the dishonesty of a relation, to whom Sophroniscus left the charge of his affairs, he soon lost || This laid him under the necessity of supporting himself by labour; and he continued to practise the art of statuary in Athens; at the same time, however, devoting all the leisure he could command to the study of philosophy.

Crito, a wealthy Athenian, remarking the strong propensity towards study which this young man discovered, and admiring his ingenuous disposition and distinguished abilities, generously took him under his patronage, and entrusted him with the instruction of his children. The opportunities which Socrates by this means enjoyed of attending the public lectures of the most eminent philosophers, so far increased his thirst after wisdom, that he determined to relinquish his occupation, and every prospect of emolument which that might afford, in order to devote himself entirely to his favourite pursuits.** His first preceptor in philosophy was Anaxagoras. After this eminent master in the Ionic school left Athens, Socrates attached himself to Archelaus. Under these instructors, he diligently prosecuted the study of nature, in the usual manner of the

philosophers of the age, and became well acquainted with their doctrines.

He justly conceived the true end of philosophy to be, not to make an ostentatious display of superior learning and ability in subtle disputations or ingenious conjectures, but to free mankind from the dominion of pernicious prejudices; to correct their vices; to inspire them with the love of virtue, and thus conduct them in the path of wisdom to true felicity. He therefore assumed the character of a moral philosopher; and, looking upon the whole city of Athens as his school, and all who were disposed to lend him their attention as his pupils, he seized every occasion of communicating moral wisdom to his fellow-citizens. He passed his time chiefly in public. It was his custom in the morning to visit the places made use of for walking and public exercises; at noon, to appear among the crowds in the markets or courts, and to spend the rest of the day in those parts of the city which were most frequented.* Sometimes he collected an audience about him in the Lyceum (a pleasant meadow on the border of the river Ilyssus), where he delivered a discourse from the chair, whilst his auditors were seated on benches around him. At other times he conversed, in a less formal way, with any of his fellow-citizens in places of common resort, or with his friends at meals, or in their hours of amusement; thus making every place to which he came a school of virtue. Not only did young men of rank and fortune attend upon his lectures, but he sought for disciples even among mechanics and labourers.

The method of instruction which Socrates chiefly made use of was, to propose a series of questions to the person with whom he conversed, in order to lead him to some unforeseen conclusion. He first gained the consent of his respondent to some obvious truths, and then obliged him to admit others, from their relation, or resemblance to those to which they had already assented. Without making use of any direct argument or persuasion, he chose to lead the person he meant to instruct to deduce the truths of which he wished to convince him as a necessary consequence from his own concessions.† He commonly conducted these conferences with such address as to conceal his design till the respondent had advanced too far to recede. On some occasions he made use of ironical language, that vain men might be caught in their own replies, and be obliged to confess their ignorance. He never assumed the air of a morose and rigid preceptor, but communicated useful instruction with all the ease and pleasantry of polite conversation.

The wisdom and the virtues of this great man,

* Laert. 1. ii. sect. 18. Suidas. Arund. Marbles.

† Plato, Alcib. i. Theat. Val. Max. 1. iii. c. 4. Athen. Deipn. 1. v. p. 219.

‡ Laert. Pausan. 1. i. c. 22. 1. ix. c. 35.

§ About £300.

|| Libanius Apol. t. i. p. 640. Laert.

¶ Laert. Shidas in Critou, Max. Tyr. Diss. 22

** Liban. ib. Elian, Var. Hist 1. ii. c. 43.

* Xen. Mem. 1. i. Laert. ii. Plut. *Utrum seni gerenda resp.*

† Cic. Acad. Q. 1. iv. c. 5. De Invent. 1. i. c. 31. De Orat. 1. ii. c. 67. Quintil. Inst. c. ix. ult. 2.

whilst they procured him many followers, also created him many enemies. There were at this time in Athens a large body of professional preceptors of eloquence, distinguished by the appellation of Sophists. By the mere pomp of words, these men made a magnificent display of wisdom, upon a slight foundation of real knowledge; and they taught an artificial structure of language, and a false method of reasoning, by means of which they were able, in argument, to make the worse appear the better cause.* At the same time that they arrogantly assumed to themselves the merit of every kind of learning, they publicly practised the art of disputing with plausibility on either side of any question, and professed to teach this art to the Athenian youth. By these imposing pretensions, they collected, in their schools, a numerous train of young men, who followed them in hope of acquiring those talents which would give them weight and authority in popular assemblies. In such high repute were these Sophists, that they were liberally supported, not only by contributions from their pupils, but by a regular salary from the state, and were in many instances distinguished by public honours, and employed in offices of magistracy.†

That such systematical provision should be made for corrupting the principles and taste of the Athenian youth, was much lamented by all honest men, and particularly by Socrates,‡ whose good sense revolted against every idle abuse of language and pernicious perversion of reason, and whose public spirit would not suffer him to remain an inactive spectator of this growing evil. In order to dissipate the fascination which these pretenders to wisdom had spread over the minds of youth, Socrates daily employed himself, after his peculiar manner, in perplexing them with questions, which were ingeniously contrived to expose their ignorance and convince the public of their dishonesty. The result was, that the Sophists began to be deserted, and the Athenian youth to return to the love and pursuit of true wisdom. The contest, though salutary to Athens, proved, in the issue, fatal to Socrates.

The Sophists, finding their reputation and emoluments daily declining, became inveterate in their enmity against this bold reformer, and eagerly seized every occasion of exposing him to public ridicule or censure. Whilst Socrates was prosecuting his design of instructing the Athenian youth with increasing reputation and success, his enemies devised an expedient, by means of which they hoped to check the current of his popularity. They engaged Aristophanes,§ the first buffoon of

the age, to write a comedy, in which Socrates should be the principal character. Aristophanes, pleased with so prominent an occasion of displaying his low and malignant wit, undertook the task, and produced the comedy of *The Clouds*, still extant in his works. In this piece Socrates is introduced hanging in a basket in the air, and thence pouring forth absurdity and profaneness.

From this time Socrates continued, for many years, to pursue without interruption his laudable design of instructing and reforming his fellow-citizens. At length, however, when the inflexible integrity with which he had discharged the duty of a senator, and the firmness with which he had opposed every kind of political corruption and oppression, both under the democracy and the oligarchy, had greatly increased the number of his enemies, the conspiracy which had long been concerted against his life was resumed. After the dissolution of the tyranny, clandestine arts were employed to raise a general prejudice against him. The people were industriously reminded that Critias, who had been one of the most cruel of the Thirty Tyrants, and Alcibiades, who had insulted religion by defacing the public statues of Mercury,* and performing a mock representation of the Eleusinian mysteries, had in their youth been disciples of Socrates.

The minds of the people being thus artfully prepared for the sequel, the enemies of Socrates preferred a direct accusation against him before the supreme court of judicature. His accusers were Anytus, a leather-dresser, who had long entertained a personal enmity against Socrates, for reprehending his avarice, in depriving his sons of the benefits of learning, that they might pursue the gains of trade; Melitus, a young rhetorician, who was capable of undertaking any thing for the sake of gain; and Lycon, who was glad of any opportunity of displaying his talents. The accusation, which was delivered to the senate under the name of Melitus, was this: "Melitus, son of Melitus, of the tribe of Pythos, accuseth Socrates, son of Sophroniscus, of the tribe of Alopeces. Socrates violates the laws, in not acknowledging the gods which the state acknowledges, and by introducing new divinities. He also violates the laws by corrupting the youth. Be his punishment DEATH."†

When the day of trial arrived, his accusers appeared in the senate, and attempted to support their charge in three distinct speeches, which strongly marked their respective characters. Plato, who was a young man, and a zealous follower of Socrates, then rose up to address the judges in defence of his master; but, whilst he was attempting to apologise for his youth, he was abruptly commanded by the court to sit down

* Cic. de Orator. c. 12.

† Kriek. Diss. de Soph. Jan. 1702. Walchii Diss. Acad. p. 104. Menag. ad Laert. l. i. sect. 12.

‡ Cic. Brut. c. 8.

§ Aristoph. Nubes. Ælian, Hist. Var. l. ii. c. 13. Plut. de Puer. Educ.

* Laert. Plut. in Alcib.

† Laert. Plato in Apologia. Zen. Apol. Mem. l. iv.

Socrates, however, needed no advocate. Ascending the chair with all the serenity of conscious innocence, and with all the dignity of superior merit, he delivered, in a firm and manly tone, an unpremeditated defence of himself, which silenced his opponents, and ought to have convinced his judges. After tracing the progress of the conspiracy which had been raised against him to its true source, the jealousy and resentment of men whose ignorance he had exposed, and whose vices he had ridiculed and reprov'd, he distinctly replied to the several charges brought against him by Melitus.

The judges, notwithstanding, still remained inexorable: they proceeded, without farther delay, to pronounce sentence upon him; and he was condemned to be put to death by the poison of hemlock. Socrates received the sentence with perfect composure, and by a smile testified his contempt both for his accusers and his judges. Then, turning to his friends, he expressed his entire satisfaction in the recollection of his past life, and declared himself firmly persuaded that posterity would do so much justice to his memory as to believe that he had never injured or corrupted any one, but had spent his days in serving his fellow-citizens, by communicating to them, without reward, the precepts of wisdom. Conversing in this manner, he was conducted from the court to the prison, which he entered with a serene countenance and a lofty mind, amidst the lamentations of his friends.*

Towards the close of the day of his death, Socrates retired into an adjoining apartment to bathe, his friends, in the meantime, expressing to one another their grief at the prospect of losing so excellent a father, and being left to pass the rest of their days in the solitary state of orphans. After a short interval, during which he gave some necessary instructions to his domestics, and took his last leave of his children, the attendant of the prison informed him that the time for drinking the poison was come. The executioner, though accustomed to such scenes, shed tears as he presented the fatal cup. Socrates received it without change of countenance, or the least appearance of perturbation; then, offering up a prayer to the gods, that they would grant him a prosperous passage into the invisible world, with perfect composure he swallowed the poisonous draught. His friends around him burst into tears. Socrates alone remained unmoved. He upbraided their pusillanimity, and entreated them to exercise a manly constancy, worthy of the friends of virtue. He continued walking till the chilling operation of the hemlock obliged him to lie down upon his bed. After remaining for a short time silent, he requested Crito (probably in order to refute a calumny which might prove injurious to his friends after his decease) not to neglect the offering of a cock which he had vowed to Esculapius. Then

covering himself with his cloak, he expired.* Such was the fate of the virtuous Socrates! "A story," says Cicero, which I never read without tears."†

Such was the first philosophical martyr offered up a sacrifice to sophistry and superstition.

Socrates was more of a practical than speculative philosopher, as the following brief summary of his opinions on morality will show. His sentiments on religion, however, though inferior to the grovelling superstitions of his countrymen, were rather dreamy, and in no way an improvement, on those who had speculated before him—such as Thales and Anaxagoras. "True felicity," he says, "is not to be derived from external possessions, but from wisdom, which consists in the knowledge and practice of virtue; that the cultivation of virtuous manners is necessarily attended with pleasure, as well as profit; that the honest man alone is happy; and that it is absurd to attempt to separate things, which are in nature so closely united as virtue and interest.

But it is impossible, in detached sentences, to give the reader any tolerable idea of the moral doctrine of Socrates. We must therefore refer him, on this head, to that valuable treasure of ancient wisdom, *The Memorabilia of Socrates*; a work in which he will find his original conversations on many interesting topics related with that beautiful simplicity which distinguishes the writings of Xenophon.‡

The followers of Socrates may be divided into three classes. The first class consists of such as were neither philosophers by profession nor addicted to the study of philosophy, but attended upon Socrates as a moral preceptor, for the purpose of correcting and improving their manners. Among these were several young men of the first rank in Athens, particularly Alcibiades and Critias.|| In this class may also be placed the poets Evanes and Euripides, and the orators Lysias and Isocrates. The Second Class included all those who, after his death, became founders of particular sects, and, though they differed from each other greatly, were united under the general appellation of Socratic Philosophers. These were Aristippus, the founder of the Cyrenaic sect; Phædo of the Eliac; Euclid, of the Megaric; Plato, of the Academic; and Antisthenes of the Cynic, whose histories will be related in the sequel of this work. The Third Class comprehends those disciples of Socrates, who, though their

* Vid. Xenophon. Apolog. Memor. l. iv. Platon. Apol. Crito. Phædo. Eutyphron. Laert. l. ii. Ælian Var. Hist. l. ii. c. 13.

† Nat. D. l. iii. c. 33.

‡ Conf. Clem. Alex. Strom. l. i. p. 417. l. iii. p. 478. l. v. p. 598. Cic. Off. l. i. c. 3. Max. Tyr. Diss. xi. Stob. Serm. l. 3. 28. &c. Ant. et Max. Serm. 53, &c.

Xen. Mem. l. i.

* Senec. Consol. ad Helv. c. 14.

names are found in the catalogue of philosophers, did not institute any new sect.

There succeeded the school of Socrates, the Academics and the Cynics, from the latter of which arose the Peripatetic and the Stoic; and in connection with the Stoic succession the inferior sects of the Cyreniac, the Megaric, the Eliac and Ere-
stiac.

The Academic school was formed by PLATO, who was endowed with more brilliancy of fancy than strength of judgment, and hence the most imaginary virtues and qualities were given by him to human nature, and defended with all that surpassing eloquence of which he was so great a master. Instead of improving and simplifying the doctrines of his master, Socrates, he rendered them complex and incomprehensible by the vagaries which he conceived and incorporated with them; so that instead of advancing sound philosophy and free inquiry, his doctrines in after times from their speculative and imaginative character, became the greatest stumbling block in the way of mental progress.

The greatest reasoner, though not the soundest philosopher of these times, was ARISTOTLE, who, in early life was a pupil of Plato; and as we find many excellent principles, and the foundation some important general truths in his philosophy, we shall dwell a little longer on him than we have done on his dreamy and poetic preceptor. Aristotle was the founder of the Peripatetic sect. He was a native of Stagira, a town of Thrace,* on the borders of the bay of Strymon, which at that time was subject to Philip of Macedon. His father was a physician, named Nicomachus; his mother's name was Eestiana. From the place of his birth he is called the Stagirite. Ancient writers are generally agreed in fixing the time of his birth in the first year of the ninety-ninth Olympiad.† He received the first rudiments of learning from Proxenus, of Atarna, in Mysia, of whom he always retained a respectful remembrance. In gratitude for the care he had taken of his early education, he afterwards honoured his memory with a statue, instructed his son Nicanor in the liberal sciences, and adopted him as his heir.‡ At the age of seventeen, Aristotle went to Athens, and devoted himself to the study of philosophy in the school of Plato.§ The uncommon acuteness of his apprehension, and his indefatigable industry, soon attracted the attention of Plato, and obtained his applause. Plato used to call him the *Mind of the school*; and to say, when he was absent, "Intellect is not here." His acquaintance with books was extensive and accurate, as sufficiently appears

from the concise abridgment of opinions, and the numerous quotations which are found in his works. According to Strabo,* he was the first person who formed a library. Aristotle continued in the Academy till the death of Plato, that is, till the thirty-seventh year of his age. After the death of his master he erected a monument to his memory, on which he inscribed an epitaph expressive of the highest respect, of which a Latin version is preserved: †

To Plato's sacred name this tomb is reared,
A name by Aristotle long revered!
Far hence, ye vulgar herd! nore dare to stain
With impious praise this ever hallowed fane.

He likewise wrote an oration and elegics in praise of Plato, and gave other proofs of respect for his memory. Little regard is therefore due to the improbable tale related by Aristoxenus ‡ of a quarrel between Aristotle and Plato, which terminated in a temporary exclusion of Aristotle from the Academy, and in his erection of a school in opposition to Plato during his life. We find no proof that Aristotle instituted a new system of philosophy before the death of Plato.

It is certain, however, that when Speusippus, upon the death of his uncle, succeeded him in the Academy, Aristotle was so much displeased, that he left Athens, and paid a visit to Hermias, king of the Atarnenses, who had been his friend and fellow-disciple, and who received him with every expression of regard.§ Here he remained three years, and during this interval diligently prosecuted his philosophical researches.

After this he became the preceptor of Alexander the Great. When he had done with the education of his pupil, he returned to Athens. Upon his return, finding the Academy, in which he probably intended to reside, occupied by Xenocrates, he resolved to acquire the fame of a leader in philosophy by founding a new sect in opposition to the Academy, and teaching a system of doctrines different from that of Plato.|| The place which he chose for his school was the *Lyceum*, ¶ a grove in the suburbs of Athens, which had hitherto been made use of for military exercises.

* Ammon.

† L. xiii. p. 608.

‡ Euseb. Præp. l. xv. c. 2. Suidas in Aristox. Elian, l. iii. c. 19.

§ Laert. l. c.

|| Laert. l. c. Cicero de Orat. l. iii. c. 35. Quintil. Inst. Orat. l. iii. c. 1.

¶ Laert. Suidas in Lyc.

* Herod. Polymn. p. 265, Pausan. Eliac. p. 462.

† Laert. Dionys. Hal. Epist. l. ad Ammæn. B. C. 384.

‡ Laert. Ammon. Dion. Hal. loc. cit.

§ Philopon. de Mundi Etern.

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THE STRUGGLES OF PHILOSOPHY WITH SUPERSTITION AND PRIESTCRAFT,
ILLUSTRATED IN THE HISTORY OF FREE INQUIRY.

ARTICLE II.—ANCIENT GREECE.

ACCORDING to the long established practice of philosophers among the Grecians, Egyptians, and other nations, Aristotle had his public and his secret doctrine, the former of which he called the Exoteric, and the latter the Acromatic or Esoteric. Hence* he divided his auditors into two classes to one of which he taught his Exoteric doctrine, discoursing on the principal subjects of logic, rhetoric, and policy; the other he instructed in the Acromatic, or concealed and subtle doctrine, concerning Being, Nature, and God. His more abstruse doctrines he delivered in the morning to his select disciples, whom he required to have been previously instructed in the elements of learning, and to have discovered abilities and dispositions suited to the study of philosophy. He delivered lectures to a more promiscuous auditory in the evening, when the Lyceum was open to all young men without distinction. The former he called his Morning Walk, the latter his Evening Walk. Both were much frequented.

Aristotle continued his school in the Lyceum twelve years,† for, although the superiority of his abilities, and the novelty of his doctrines created him many rivals and enemies, during the life of Alexander the friendship of that prince protected him from insult. But after Alexander's death, which happened in the first year of the hundred and fourteenth Olympiad,‡ the fire of jealousy,§ which had long been smothered, burst into a flame of persecution. His adversaries instigated Eurymedon, a priest, to accuse him of holding and propagating impious tenets. What these were, we are not expressly informed, but it is not improbable that the doctrine of Aristotle concerning fate might be construed into a denial of the necessity of prayers and sacrifices, and might consequently be resented as inimical to the public institutions of religion. This would doubtless be thought, on the part of the priesthood, a sufficient ground of accusation, and would be ad-

mitted by the judges of the Areopagus as a valid plea for treating him as a dangerous man. That Aristotle himself was apprehensive of meeting with the fate of Socrates, appears from the reason which he gave* his friends for leaving Athens: "I am not willing," says he, "to give the Athenians an opportunity of committing a second offence against philosophy." It is certain that he retired, with a few of his disciples, to Chalcis, where he remained till his death. He left Athens in the second year of the hundred and fourteenth Olympiad,† and died at Chalcis the third year of the same Olympiad, and the sixty-third year of his age.‡ Many idle tales are related§ concerning the manner of his death. It is most likely that it was the effect of premature decay, in consequence of excessive watchfulness and application to study. His body was conveyed to Stagira, where his memory was honoured with an altar and a tomb.

The case of Aristotle is another instance of the spirit of superstition manifesting that pestilential influence so liberally exhibited against all free-inquirers. Most of the subjects on which Aristotle treats are in the highest degree abstruse, and difficult to be comprehended. Universal ideas of existence, attributes, and relations, separated from real being; modes of reasoning, considered abstractedly; metaphysical disquisitions concerning matter, mind, and deity; explanations of nature, deduced from conjecture rather than experience; vague and indeterminate notions, which were probably never clearly conceived by the author himself; and subtle distinctions, merely verbal, are the materials which chiefly fill up the voluminous writings of Aristotle.

Nature, he says, subsists in material substances, and consists of two parts, matter and form; but form has more of nature than matter, because it

* *Ælian*, l. iii. c. 36.

† *B. C.* 323.

‡ *Laert.*

§ *Aul. Gell.* l. xiii. c. 5. *Just. Martyr.* *Conhort. ad Græc.* p. 36. *Greg. Naz. Orat.* iii. p. 79. *Hesychius.* *Suidas.* *Fabr. Bib. Gr.* v. : p. 166.

* *Aul. Gellius*, l. xx. c. 4.

† *Laert.* l. v. sect. 5.

‡ *B. C.* 324.

§ *Athen.* l. xv. p. 697. *Orig. cont. Cels.* l. i. p. 5. 2. l. ii. p. 68.

is in act.* By nature he certainly does not mean, as some writers have supposed, a substance different from material things, by which they are produced and arranged;† for he considers nature as intimately connected and necessarily combined with matter.‡ The truth seems to be, that Aristotle, in framing his system, finding himself in want of a principle by which form and matter might be united, and being determined to advance something new, conceived in his mind a vague notion of some internal cause of motion and arrangement, to which he applied the term Nature; and thus cut the knot which he was not able to untie. To endeavour further to elucidate his doctrine concerning the principle which he calls Nature, would therefore only be to add to the number of unmeaning words which have been already thrown away upon this subject.

Causes are distinguished by this philosopher into four kinds; Material, of which things are made; Formal, by which a thing is that which it is, and nothing else; Efficient, by the agency of which anything is produced; and Final, or the end, for which it is produced.§

Bodies are either simple or compound. Simple bodies are the elements or secondary matter, produced by the union of primary matter and form. Compound bodies are those which are produced from the combination of elementary bodies. Elements being produced, and capable of dissolution, are not eternal. The elements are four; fire, air, water, and earth. There are in elementary bodies two principles of motion, gravity and levity; by the former, bodies descend towards the centre of the world; by the latter, they rise towards the heavens. The element of earth has simple gravity; that of fire, simple levity; air and water partake of both. Compound bodies descend or ascend, in proportion to the prevalence of gravity or levity in their component parts. Those elements, which by their levity are uppermost, are most perfect. They partake, with respect to the inferior elements, of the nature of forms; for it is the property of matter to be contained, and of form to contain.||

On mind and morals he says—The soul is the first principle of action in an organised body, possessing life potentially. The soul does not move itself; for, whatever moves, is moved by some other moving power. It is not a rare body, composed of elements; for then it would not have perception, more than the elements which compose it.¶ The soul has three faculties, the nutritive,

the sensitive, and the rational; the superior comprehending the inferior potentially. The nutritive faculty is that by which life is produced and preserved. The sensitive faculty is that by which we perceive and feel: it does not perceive itself nor its organs, but some external object through the intervention of its organs, which are adapted to produce the sensations of sight, hearing, smell, taste, and touch. The senses receive sensible species, or forms, without matter, as wax receives the impression of a seal without receiving any part of its substance. The external senses perceive objects, but it is the common or internal sense which observes their difference.* The internal sense perceives various objects at the same instant. Perception differs from intellect, the former being common to all animals, the latter to a few. Fancy is the perception produced in any animal by the immediate action of the senses. It is accompanied with different feelings, according to the nature of the object by which it is produced. Memory† is derived from fancy, and has its seat in the same power of the soul. It is the effect of some image impressed upon the soul by means of the senses. Where this image cannot be retained, through an excess of moisture or dryness in the temperature of the brain, memory ceases. Reminiscence‡ is that faculty of the mind by which we search for any thing, which we wish to recollect, through a series of things nearly related to it, till at last we call to mind what we had forgotten. The intellect§ is that part of the soul by which it understands. It is of two kinds, passive and active: passive intellect is that faculty by which the understanding receives the forms of things; it is the seat of species. Active intellect is the efficient cause of all knowledge, and is either simple, when it is employed in the near apprehension of its object, or complex, when it compounds simple conceptions in order to produce belief and assent. The latter is either true or false, the former neither. The action of the intellect is either theoretical or practical; theoretical, when it simply considers what is true or false; and practical, when it judges whether any thing is good or evil, and thereby excites the will to pursue or avoid it. The principle of local motion is the desire, or aversion, which arises from the practical exercise of the understanding. This desire or aversion, produces either rational volition, or sensitive appetite. The production of animal life arises from the union of the nutritive soul with animal heat. Life is the continuance of this union, death its dissolution.||

The nature of the first principle of animal life, and of all perception, intelligence, and action,

* Phys. l. ii. c. 1. p. 26.

† Cudworth's intellectual System, p. 157.

‡ Phys. l. ii. c. 2.

§ Phys. l. ii. c. 3. p. 165.

|| De Colo, l. iii. c. 3. p. 372. l. iv. c. 1. p. 378. He Gen. et Corr. l. i. c. 3. p. 386.

¶ De Anima, l. ii. c. 4, 5, 6.

* De An. l. iii. c. 2. 3, p. 500, &c.

† De Memor. l. i. c. 1. p. 523. ‡ Ib. c. 2.

§ De Anim. l. iii. c. 4—11. p. 502, &c.

|| De Vite et Morte, c. 17, 18.

Aristotle, as well as all other philosophers, was at a loss to explain. Having no other way of judging concerning it, than by observing its operations as far as they are subjects of experience, he could only define the mind to be that principle by which we live, perceive, and understand.

Moral felicity consists neither in the pleasures of the body, nor in riches; nor in civil glory, power, and rank; nor in the contemplation of truth; but in the virtuous exercise of the mind. A virtuous life is in itself a source of delight. External goods, such as friends, riches, power, beauty, and the like, are instruments, by means of which illustrious deeds may be performed. Virtue is either theoretical or practical: theoretical virtue consists in the due exercise of the understanding; practical in the pursuit of what is right and good. Practical virtue is acquired by habit and exercise.*

Virtue, as far as it respects ourselves and the government of the passions, consists in preserving that mean in all things which reason and prudence prescribe: *it is the middle path between two extremes, one of which is vicious through excess, the other through defect.* Virtue is a spontaneous act, the effect of design and volition. It is completed by nature, habit, and reason. The first virtue is Fortitude, which is the mean between timidity and rash confidence. *Temperance is the mean between the excessive pursuit and the neglect of pleasure.* Liberality is the mean between prodigality and avarice. Magnificence preserves a due decorum in great expenses, and is the mean between haughty grandeur and low parsimony. Magnanimity respects the love of applause, and the judgment a man forms of his own merit, and holds the middle place between meanness of spirit and pride. Moderation respects distinction in rank, and is the mean between ambition and the contempt of greatness. Gentleness is the due government of the irascible passions, and observes a proper medium between anger and insensibility. Affability respects the desire of pleasing in the ordinary occurrences of life, and pursues the middle path between moroseness and servility. Simplicity in the practice of virtue is the mean between arrogant pretensions to merit, and an artful concealment of defects. Urbanity respects sports and jests, and avoids rusticity and scurrility. Modesty is a certain apprehension of incurring disgrace, and lies in the middle way between impudence and bashfulness. Justice includes the observance of the laws for the preservation of society, and the discharge of obligations and debts between equals. Equity corrects the rigour of laws, or supplies their defects. Friendship is nearly allied to virtue; it consists in perfect affection towards an equal. Friendships are formed for the sake of pleasure, convenience, or virtue. Friendship is cherished by mutual acts of generosity: it is begun in kindness and preserved by

concord; its end is, the pleasant enjoyment of life.*

Pleasures are essentially different in kind. Disgraceful pleasures are wholly unworthy of the name. The purest and noblest pleasure is that which a good man derives from virtuous actions. Happiness, which consists in a conduct conformable to virtue, is either contemplative or active. Contemplative happiness, which consists in the pursuit of knowledge and wisdom, is superior to active happiness, because the understanding is the higher part of human nature, and the objects on which it is employed are of the noblest kind. The happiness, which arises from external possessions, is inferior to that which arises from virtuous actions; but both are necessary to produce perfect felicity.

This may serve as a specimen of the moral philosophy which is to be found in Aristotle's *Book of Ethics*, dedicated to Nichomachus, in his *Greater Morals*, and his discourse *On the Virtues*. The truth is, that though these writings contain many useful precepts, and just observations, they are by no means to be considered as a perfect code of morals, adapted to produce genuine integrity and simplicity of manners.

We shall pass slightly over the Cynics and Stoics who evolved nothing new in their respective systems; the one sect being a coterie of ill-natured and discontented philosophers, if we can call them by the name; and the other placing virtue in the subduing of all the feelings and impulses of humanity to a kind of icy indifference to sublunary things. Neither system was founded on a true perception of human nature, or calculated for general adoption: and neither were instrumental in advancing science, or hastening the progress of true morality. Zeno, the founder of the Stoical school, received his doctrine of physics from Pythagoras and Heraclitus through the Platonic school; and his moral doctrines from the Cynics. He had attended many masters, and being intimately conversant with their opinions, he compiled out of their various tenets a heterogeneous system, on the credit of which he assumed to himself the title of the founder of a new sect. The dialectic arts which Zeno learned in the school of Diodorus Chronus, he zealously applied to the support of his own system, and to communicate to his followers. The idle quibbles, jejune reasonings, and imposing sophisms, which so justly exposed the schools of the dialectic philosophers to ridicule, found their way into the Porch, where much time was wasted, and much ingenuity thrown away, upon questions of no importance. Cicero censures the Stoics† for encouraging in their schools a barren kind of disputation, and employing themselves in determining trifling questions, in which the disputants can have no interest, and

* Mor. l. ii. c. 5—9. l. iii. c. 4. 5. 9—14. l. iv. c. 1. 7. 11. 13. 15. l. v. c. 2. 3. 8. 9. l. vi. c. 2—7. l. vii. c. 1. l. viii. c. 1. 6. l. ix. c. 4—6. 12.

† De Fin. l. iii. c. 1. l. iv. c. 3.

* Arist. Mor. l. i. c. 3—6. 9, 10. l. x. c. 6.

which, at the close, leave them neither wiser nor better. And that this censure is not, as some modern advocates of Stoicism have maintained, a mere calumny, but grounded upon fact, sufficiently appears from what is said by the ancients, particularly by Sextus Empiricus, concerning the logic of the Stoics. Seneca, who was himself a Stoic, candidly acknowledges this.*

Apart, however, from the verbage of the Stoic philosophy, we find the recognition of some important principles, since more fully carried out and illustrated. On the mind, the Stoics had the following rational conceptions. The mind of man is originally like a blank leaf, wholly without characters, but capable of receiving any. The impressions which are made upon it, by means of the senses, remain in the memory, after the objects which occasioned them are removed; a succession of these continued impressions, made by similar objects, produces experience; and hence arises permanent notions, opinions, and knowledge. Even universal principles, are originally formed, by experience, from sensible images. All men agree in their common notions or preconceptions; disputes only arise concerning the application of these to particular cases. † The first impressions from the senses produce in the mind an involuntary emotion; but a wise man afterwards deliberately examines them, that he may know whether the image be true or false, and assents to or rejects them, as the evidence which offers itself to his understanding appears sufficient or insufficient. This assent or approbation will indeed be as necessarily given, or withheld, according to the ultimate state of the proofs which are adduced, as the scales of a balance will sink or rise, according to the weights which are placed upon them; but while the vulgar give immediate credit to the reports of the senses, wise men suspend their assent till they have deliberately examined the nature of things, and carefully estimated the weight of evidence. ‡

The Fate of the Stoics, however obscurely enunciated, was only another form of embodying the modern principle of philosophical necessity. They held that the Deity is subject to the law of necessity no less than matter and all subordinate beings. Seneca, and other writers of this sect, expressly assert. "Both gods and men are bound, by the same chain of necessity. Divine and human affairs are alike borne along in an irresistible current; cause depends upon cause; effects arise in a long succession; nothing happens by accident, but every thing comes to pass in the established order of nature." || Ac-

cording to Zeno and his followers, * there existed from eternity a dark and confused chaos, in which was contained the first principles of all future beings. This chaos, being at length arranged, and emerging into variable forms, became the world, as it now subsists. The world, or nature, is that whole, which comprehends all things, and of which all things are parts and members. The universe, though one whole, contains two principles, distinct from elements, one passive, the other active. The passive principle is pure matter without qualities; the active principle is reason or God. This is the fundamental doctrine of the Stoics concerning nature.

Another offshoot from the Socratic philosophy, was Aristippus the founder of the Cyrenaic sect. Whilst Aristippus was attending the Olympic games, he heard reports concerning the wisdom of Socrates, † which inspired him with an impatient desire of becoming one of his disciples, and immediately took up his residence in Athens. On his first arrival, he made Socrates an offer of money, as a gratuity for the privilege of attending his instructions; but the philosopher, after his usual manner, refused it. Admitted among the number of his followers Aristippus discovered such marks of ability, and made so rapid a progress in knowledge, that he was, for some time, esteemed one of the chief ornaments of the Socratic school, and raised no small degree of envy among his fellow-disciples.

Several maxims and observations are ascribed to Aristippus which are not unworthy of the Socratic school; for example: If there were no laws, a wise man would live honestly. It is better to be poor than illiterate; for the poor only wants money, the illiterate wants the distinguishing characters of human nature. The houses of the wealthy are frequented by philosophers, for the same reason for which those of the sick are frequented by physicians. The truly learned are not they who read much, but they who read what is useful. Young people should be taught those things, which will be useful to them when they become men. ‡ He agreed with Socrates in dismissing, as wholly unprofitable, all those speculations which have no connexion with the conduct of life. He compared those philosophers who neglected moral science, in the pursuit of that which is purely speculative, to Penelope's suitors, who preferred the handmaid to the mistress || The distinguishing tenets of his system as far as they can be collected from the casual, and perhaps unfair representations of prejudiced contemporaries,

* Ep. 48. 82. 113.

† Plut. Plac. l. iv. c. 11, 12. Arrian. l. i. Diss. 22. Cic. Ac. Qu. l. i. c. 11.

‡ Cic. Ac. Qu. l. iv. Aul. Gellinus, l. xix. c. 1.

|| Seneca de Providentia c. 5. Anton. l. iv. sect. 10. 24. 34. Aul. Gell. l. vi. c. 2.

* Laer. l. v. sect. 150. Stob. Ecl. Phys. c. 14. Senec. Consol. ad Pol. c. 20.

† Plut. de Curiositate.

‡ Laert.

|| Ibid. l. ii. sect. 79, 80. Arist. Met. l. ii. c. 21.

and from the adulterated and vague reports of later writers, are as follows:—

Perceptions alone are certain; of the external objects which produce them, we know nothing. No one can be assured that the perception excited in the mind by any external object is similar to that which is excited by the same object in the mind of another person.* Human nature is subject to two contrary affections, pain and pleasure, the one a harsh, the other a gentle emotion. The emotions of pleasure, though they may differ in degree, or in the object which excites them, are the same in all animals, and universally create desire. Those of pain are, in like manner, essentially the same, and universally create aversion. Happiness consists not in tranquillity or indolence, but in a pleasing agitation of the mind, or active enjoyment. Pleasure is the ultimate object of human pursuit; it is only in subserviency to this that fame, friendship, and even virtue, are to be desired. All crimes are venial because never committed but through the immediate impulse of passion. Nothing is just or unjust by nature, but by custom and law. The business of philosophy is to regulate the senses, in that manner which will render them most productive of pleasure. Since pleasure is to be derived, not from the past or the future, but the present, a wise man will take care to enjoy the present hour, and will be indifferent to life or death.†

In the specimen we have just given of the opinions of Aristippus will be seen a faint enunciation of the doctrine of utility, or of happiness being the foundation of morals. We have now glanced at the leading philo-sophers and divisions of the Ionic school; stated their more sound and practical principle, and noticed the persecutions from which some of them suffered. Their wild and baseless speculations about God spirit, and creation, with their wordy quibbles and sophisms, we have passed unnoticed; our object being to bring forward what was true and valuable in the philo-sophy of each, that the reader might be furnished with sound data respecting the origin and progress of that useful and practical wisdom which modern free-thinking inculcates, and which superstition and priestcraft condemn, and endeavour to destroy. A more prolific harvest awaits us, in this respect, in the next stage of our inquiry, in reviewing the progress of that great division of ancient Greek philosophy beginning with Pythagoras and ending with Epicurus; known by the name of the Italic school, in contradistinction to the Ionic, to which all those already noticed belonged.

* Sextus Emp. adv. Math. l. vii. sect. 191. Cic. in Lucullo, c. 7. Acad. Q. l. iv. c. 7.

† Laert. l. ii. sect. 92—95. Cic. de Fin. l. ii. c. 71 l. v. c. 128 Tusc. Q. l. iii. c. 13 ii. c. 6 De Offic. iii. 33. Athen. lx. ii. p. 554. Elian, Var. Hist. l. xiv. sect. 6.

This school having been first instituted in that part of Italy, which, from the Grecian colonies that had been settled there, was called *Magna Græcia*, has taken the appellation of the *ITALIC SCHOOL*.

The ancients are by no means agreed concerning the birth-place of *PYTHAGORAS*;* but the more common opinion is, that he was a native of the island of Samos. Of his extraction nothing farther is known than that his father's name was Mnesarchus, probably a merchant of Tyre, or some other maritime city, who, trading to Samos, was admitted to the rights of citizenship, and settled his family in that island. As to the tale of Jamblicus,† which makes him a descendant of Jupiter, and relates a prediction of his birth and character from the Delphian priest, barely to mention, is to refute it.

For the purpose of making himself proficient in wisdom, he travelled from Greece into Egypt; and while there it is said he was introduced, by the recommendation of Polycrates, tyrant of Samos, to Anaxis, king of Egypt, a great patron of learned men, particularly those of Greece, that he might the more easily obtain access to the colleges of the priests. The king himself could scarcely, with all his authority, prevail upon the priests to admit a stranger to the knowledge of their sacred mysteries.‡ The college of Heliopolis, to whom the king's instructions were sent, referred Pythagoras to the college of Memphis, as of great antiquity; from Memphis he was dismissed, under the same pretence, to Thebes. The Theban priests, not daring to reject the royal mandate yet loathe to comply with it, prescribed Pythagoras many severe and troublesome preliminary ceremonies, among which was that of circumcision,§ hoping thereby to discourage him from prosecuting his design. Pythagoras, however, executed all their injunctions with such wonderful patience and perseverance, that he obtained their entire confidence, and was instructed in their most recondite doctrines. He passed twenty-two years in Egypt.¶ During this time he made himself perfectly master of the three kinds of writing which were in use in Egypt, the epistolary, the hieroglyphical, and the symbolical; and, having obtained access to the most learned men in every celebrated college of priests, he became intimately conversant with their ancient records,|| and gained an accurate acquaintance with their doctrine concerning the origin of things, with their astronomy and geo-

* Laert. l. viii. sect. 1. Conf. Clem. Alex. Strom. l. i. p. 300. Plut. Qu. Conv. l. viii. c. 7. t. i. p. 286.

† Vit. Pyth. c. 2. Porph. n. 1.

‡ Herodot. l. ii. c. 172. Diodor. Sic. l. i. c. 2.

§ Clem. Alex. Strom. l. i. p. 302.

¶ Jamb. c. 4. n. 18.

|| Valer. Max. l. viii. c. 7.

metry, and, in short, with Egyptian learning in its whole extent.

Pythagoras, returning from Egypt to his native island, after an absence of more than twenty years, was desirous that his fellow-citizens should reap the benefit of his travels and studies, and for this purpose attempted to institute a school for their instruction in the elements of science,* but chose to adopt the Egyptian method of teaching, and communicate his doctrines under a symbolical form. The Samians were either too indolent, or too stupid, to profit by his instructions. The number of his followers was so inconsiderable, that he was obliged for the present to relinquish his design. Loth, however, entirely to abandon the project, he determined, if possible, to find other means of engaging the attention of his countrymen. With this idea he repaired to Delos, and after presenting an offering of cakes to Apollo, there received, or pretended to receive, moral dogmas from the priestesses†, which he afterwards delivered to his disciples under the character of divine precepts. With the same design he also visited the island of Crete, so celebrated in mythological history, where he was conducted by the Corybantes, or priests of Cybele, into the cave of Mount Ida, in which Jupiter is said to have been buried‡. Here he conversed with Epimenides, an eminent pretender to prophetic powers, and was by him initiated into the most sacred mysteries of Greece. About the same time he visited Sparta and Elis, and was present during the celebration of the Olympic games,§ where he is said to have exhibited a golden thigh to Abaris, in order to convince him that he was Apollo. Amongst the places which he visited during his stay in Greece, was Phlius, the residence of Leon, king of the Phliansians. Here he first assumed the appellation of Philosopher.||

Had Pythagoras contented himself with issuing forth oracular precepts of wisdom, and instructing his select disciples in the speculative doctrines of philosophy, it is probable that he might have continued his labours, without molestation, to the end of his life. But he discovered on many occasions a strong propensity towards political innovations. Not only at Crotona, but at Metapontus, Rhegium, Agrigentum, and many other places, he obtained great influence over the people, and employed it in urging them to the strenuous assertion of their rights against the encroachments of their tyrannical governors.¶

These attempts, together with the singularity of his school, excited a general spirit of jealousy and raised a powerful opposition against him. At the head of this opposition was Cylo, a man of wealth and distinction in Crotona, who had been refused admission into the society of the Pythagoreans, and whose temper was too haughty and violent to endure with patience such an indignity. The party thus raised against the Pythagoreans hearing that they were assembled in a large body at the house of Milo, one of their chief friends, surrounded the house and set it on fire. About forty persons perished in the flames. Archippus and Lysis, two natives of Tarentum, alone escaped: the former withdrew to his own city; the latter fled to Thebes.

Pythagoras himself, if he was not present at the assembly, was probably at Crotona at the time when this fatal attack was made upon his school.

Pythagorus, like most other teachers of his time, made use of his knowledge as an instrument of imposture and deception; often representing himself as in communication with supernatural powers. His doctrines were full of mysticism and wild speculation, mixed up with the most fanciful and absurd religious notions: still there is recognized in the heterogeneous mass the elements of some of the most important principles of morality and science, afterwards elaborated and made plainer by clearer and less wayward minds. Concerning morals, he taught as follows:—

Virtue is divided into two branches, private and public. Private virtue respects education, silence, abstinence from animal food, fortitudes, sobriety, and prudence. The powers of the mind, are, reason and passion; and when the latter is preserved in subjection to the former, virtue is prevalent. Young persons should be inured to subjection, that they may always find it easy to submit to the authority of reason. Let them be conducted into the best course of life, and habit will soon render it the most pleasant. Silence is better than idle words. A wise man will prepare himself for everything which is not in his own power. Do what you judge to be right, whatever the vulgar may think of you; if you despise their praise, despise also their censure. All animal pleasures should rather be postponed, than enjoyed before their time, and should only be enjoyed according to nature, and with sobriety. Much forethought and discretion is necessary in the production and education of children. Wisdom and virtue are our best defence; every other guard is weak and unstable. It requires much wisdom to give right names to things.*

His doctrines respecting matter and mind are more speculative. The material world, according

* Jamb. c. 5. n. 20. 25. Laert. l. viii. sect. 13.

† Porphyry. n. 41. Laert. sect. 8.

‡ Porphy. n. 17. Laert. sect. 3.

§ Val. Max. l. viii. c. 7.

|| Cic. Tusc. Qu. l. v. c. 3. Conf. Laert. l. i. sect. 12. Jamb. c. viii. n. 44. xii. 58.—See Preliminary Observations to this work, p. 1.

¶ Porphy. n. 20. Jamb. c. 31. n. 214. Conf. Diodor. l. xii.

* Stobæi, Serm. 5. 17. 16. 37. 39. 66. 99. Jamb. Vit. Pyth. c. xxxi. n. 224. xxxii. Protrep. c. 6. Diod. Excerpt. Vales. p. 247. Cic. de Senect. c. 20. Tusc. Qu. l. i.

to Pythagoras, was produced by the energy of the Divine Intelligence.* It is an animated sphere, beyond which is a perfect vacuum. It contains spheres, which revolve with musical harmony.† The atmosphere of the earth is a gross, immutable, and morbid mass; but the air, or ether, which surrounds it, is pure, healthful, serene, perpetually moving, the region of all divine and immortal natures.‡ The sun, moon, and stars are inhabited by portions of the divinity, or gods. The sun is a spherical body.§ Its eclipses are caused by the passing of the moon between it and the earth. The moon is inhabited by demons. Comets are stars, which are not always seen, but rise at stated periods.||

Concerning man, the Pythagoreans taught, that, consisting of an elementary nature, and a divine or rational principle, he is a microcosm, or compendium of the universe; that his soul is a self-moving principle, composed of two parts—the rational, which is a portion of the soul of the world, seated in the brain, and the irrational, which includes the passions, and is seated in the heart.¶ that man participates in both these with the brutes, which, from the temperament of their body, and their want of the power of speech, are incapable of acting rationally; that the sensitive soul perishes, but the rational mind is immortal, because the source whence it is derived is immortal; ** that after the rational mind is freed from the chains of the body, it assumes an ethereal vehicle, and passes into the regions of the dead, where it remains till it is sent back to this world, to be the inhabitant of some other body, brutal or human; and that after suffering successive purgations, when it is sufficiently purified, it is received among the gods, and returns to the eternal source from which it first proceeded.††

The doctrines of the Pythagoreans, respecting the nature of brute animals, and the transmigration of souls, were the foundation of their abstinence from animal food and of the exclusion of animal sacrifices from their religious ceremonies. The latter doctrine is thus beautifully represented by Ovid,‡‡ who introduces Pythagoras as saying—

“What then is death, but ancient matter drest
In new form figure, and a varied vest?

* Stob. Ecl. Phys. l. i. c. 25.

† Laert. l. viii. sect. 27. Arist. de Cælo, l. ii. c. 1. Plut. Plac. Ph. l. i. c. 10. 25. Sext. Emp. l. vii. c. 95.

‡ Hierocl. l. c.

§ Plut. Pl. Ph. l. i. c. 15. Stob. l. c. p. 55.

|| Plut. l. c. c. 28. Jam. c. vi. n. 30.

¶ Laert. l. viii. sect. 28—31. Plut. l. c. l. iv. c. 2. 4. 7. 20.

** Clem. Alex. Strom. l. v. p. 590. Cic. c.

†† Laert. Hieroc. in Aur. Carm. Porph. Vit. Pyth. n. 19.

‡‡ Metam. l. xv. v. 158. &c.

Thus all things are but altered, nothing dies;
And here and there th' unbodied spirit flies,
By time, or force, or sickness dispossest'd,
And lodges where it lights, in man or beast;
Or haunts without, till ready limbs it find,
And actuates those according to their kind;
From tenement to tenement is tost,
The soul is still the same, the figure only lost:
And as the soften'd wax new seals receives,
This face assumes, and that impression leaves;
Now call'd by one, now by another name,
The form is only changed, the wax is still the same:

So death, thus call'd, can but the form deface,
The immortal soul flies out in empty space,
To seek her fortune in some other place.”

This doctrine Pythagoras probably learned in Egypt, where it was commonly taught.* Nor is there any sufficient reason for understanding it, as some have done, symbolically.

Although the founder of the sect that now comes under our consideration was an Ionian, three of its most celebrated preceptors, Parmenides, Zeno, and Leucippus, having been natives of Elea, or Velia, (a town in Magna Græcia, built by a colony of Phœceans in the time of Cyrus,) the sect has derived its name from this place, and is called the Eleatic.† It must be divided into two classes; one of which treated concerning the nature and origin of things upon *metaphysical*, the other upon *physical* principles.

XENOPHANES,† the author of the Eleatic sect, was a native of Colophon. The great length of his life has led different writers to fix different dates to the time in which he flourished; but if the several chronological accounts of this philosopher be compared, it will appear probable that he was born, as Eusebius asserts, about the fifty-sixth Olympiad.§ From some cause which is not related, Xenophanes early left his country, and took refuge in Sicily, where he supported himself by reciting, in the court of Hiero, elegiac and iambic verses, which he had written in reprehension of the theogonies of Hesiod and Homer. From Sicily he passed over into Magna Græcia, where he took up the profession of philosophy, and became a celebrated preceptor in the Pythagorean school. Indulging, however, a greater freedom of thought than was usual among the disciples of Pythagoras, he ventured to introduce new opinions of his own, and in many particulars to oppose the doctrines of Epimenides, Thales, and Pythagoras. This gave occasion to Timon, who was a severe satirist, to introduce him in ridicule

* Herodot. l. ii. c. 123. Diod. Sic. apud Euseb. Pr. l. x. c. 8.

† Sirabo, l. vi. p. 252.

‡ Laert. l. viii. sect. 18. l. i. sect. 16. Clem. Al. Strom. l. i. p. 301. Plut. Apoth. t. i. p. 337. Ps. Orig. Phil. c. xiv. p. 94.

§ B. C. 556.

as one of the characters in his dialogues. Xenophanes possessed the Pythagorean chair of philosophy about seventy years, and lived to the extreme age of an hundred years, that is, according to Eusebius, till the eighty-first Olympiad.*

In Metaphysics, Xenophanes taught,† that if ever there had been a time when nothing existed, nothing could ever have existed. That whatever is, always has been from eternity, without deriving its existence from any prior principle: that nature is one without limit; that what is one is similar in all its parts, else it would be many; that the one infinite, eternal, and homogeneous universe is immutable, and incapable of change; that God is one incorporeal eternal being, and, like the universe, spherical in form; that he is of the same nature with the universe, comprehending all things within himself; is intelligent, and pervades all things; but bears no resemblance to human nature either in body or mind.‡

In physics, he taught,§ that there are innumerable worlds; that there is in nature no real production, or decay, or change; that there are four elements, and that the earth is the basis of all things; that the stars arise from vapours, which are extinguished by day and ignited by night; that the sun consists of fiery particles collected by humid exhalations, and daily renewed; that the course of the sun is rectilinear, and only appears curvilinear from its great distance; that there are as many suns as there are different climates of the earth; that the moon is an inhabited world; that the earth, as appears from marine shells, which are found at the tops of mountains, and in caverns, far from the sea, was once a general mass of waters; and that it will at length return into the same state, and pass through an endless series of similar revolutions.

Xenophanes was succeeded in the school by Parmenides, Melysus, and Zeno, who added but little to the original doctrines. These had explained the nature and origin of the universe metaphysically; but now a second sect of philosophers arose in this school, who treated the subject physically; and who, giving up all metaphysical explanations of the cause of things, attempted

to account for the phenomena of nature from the known laws of matter and motion.

The author of this essential innovation was LEUCIPPUS,* who is said by Laertius to have been a native of Elea, who was a disciple of Zeno the Eleatic philosopher. He wrote a treatise concerning nature,† now lost, from which the ancients probably collected what they relate concerning his tenets. Dissatisfied with the metaphysical subtleties, by which the former philosophers of this school had confounded all evidence from the senses, Leucippus, and his follower Democritus, determined, if possible, to discover a system more consonant to nature and reason. Leaving behind them the whole train of fanciful conceptions, numbers, ideas, proportions, qualities, and elementary forms, in which philosophers had hitherto taken refuge, as the asylum of ignorance, they resolved to examine the real constitutions of the material worlds, and inquire into the mechanical properties of bodies; that from these they might, if possible, deduce from certain knowledge of natural causes, and hence be able to account for natural appearances. Several other philosophers, before their time, had indeed considered matter as divisible into indefinitely small particles, particularly Anaxagoras, Empedocles, and Heraclitus. But Leucippus and Democritus were the first who taught that these particles were originally destitute of all qualities except figure and motion, and therefore may justly be reckoned the authors of the Atomic System of Philosophy. They looked upon the qualities, which preceding philosophers had ascribed to matter, as the mere creatures of abstraction; and they determined to admit nothing into their system which they could not establish upon the sure testimony of their senses. They were moreover of opinion, that both the Eleatic philosophers, and those of other sects, had unnecessarily encumbered their respective systems by assigning some external or internal cause of motion, of a nature not to be discovered by the senses. *They therefore resolved to reject all metaphysical principles, and in their explanation of the phenomena of nature, to proceed upon no other ground than the sensible and mechanical properties of bodies.* The first idea of the atomic system was suggested by Leucippus; it was improved by Democritus, and afterwards carried to all the perfection which the system would admit of, by Epicurus.

* Laert. Plut. l. c. Sext. Emp. Pyrrh. Hyp. l. i. c. 33. sect. 224. Fabr. Bib. Gr. v. i. p. 553. B. C. 456.

† Arist. Phys. Acroas. l. i. c. 2. Cic. Ac. Qu. l. iv. e. 37. Arist. Met. l. i. c. 5. Ps. Orig. Ph. c. xi. p. 95. Laert. l. ix. sect. 19. Sext. Emp. Pyrrh. l. i. c. 33. Cic. in Lucull. Ac. Qu. l. i. c. 37.

‡ Clem. Alex. Str. l. v. p. 601. l. vii. p. 701.

§ Arist. Orig. Laert. l. c. Stob. Ecl. Phys. p. 52. Sext. Emp. adv. Math. l. vii. sect. 49. Plut. de aud. Poet. t. ii. p. 24. 25. Pl. Ph. l. ii. c. 20. Euseb. Pr. l. i. c. 8. l. xiv. c. 17. Stob. Ecl. Ph. l. i. p. 55. 56. Cic. de Div. l. i. c. 3. Plin. l. ii. c. 103.

* Laert. l. ix. sect. 30. Tzet. Chil. v. 980.

† Pseud. Orig. Phil. c. xii. p. 88. Fabr. Bib. Gr. v. i. p. 778.

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THE STRUGGLES OF PHILOSOPHY WITH SUPERSTITION AND PRIESTCRAFT.
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ARTICLE III.—ANCIENT GREECE.

DEMOCRITUS,* the successor of Leucippus, was a native of Abdera,† a town in Thrace, the stupidity of whose inhabitants became proverbial. He was of noble descent. Laertius, after Apollonius, fixes the time of his birth in the first year of the eightieth Olympiad.‡ Elian§ must therefore be mistaken in making him contemporary with Alexander, and could have no good authority for the story which he relates, that Democritus laughed at Alexander, who complained that he had only one world to conquer.

After a long course of years spent in travelling, Democritus returned to Abdera, richly stored with the treasures of philosophy, which he had spared neither labour nor expense to procure, but destitute of the necessary means of subsistence. His brother Damasis, however, received him kindly, and liberally supplied his exigencies. It was a law in Abdera, that whoever should waste all his patrimony should be deprived of the rights of sepulture. Democritus, desirous of avoiding the disgrace to which this law subjected him, gave public instructions to the people, chiefly from his larger *Diacosmos*, the most valuable of his writings; in return he received from his hearers many valuable presents, and other testimonies of respect, which relieved him from all apprehension of suffering public censure as a spendthrift.||

Democritus appears to have been in his manners chaste and temperate;¶ and his sobriety was repaid by a healthy old age. He lived and enjoyed the use of his faculties, to the term of a hundred years (some say several years longer), and at last died through mere decay.** The fol-

lowing singular circumstance is said to have happened just before his death. His sister, who had the care of him, observing him to be near his end, expressed great regret that his immediate death would prevent her celebrating the approaching festival of Ceres; upon which Democritus, who was now unable to receive any nourishment, that he might if possible gratify her wish by living a few days longer, desired her often to bring him bread near his nostrils: the experiment succeeded, and he was preserved alive without food for three days. His death was exceedingly lamented by his countrymen; and the charge of his funeral was defrayed from the public treasury. He wrote much, but none of his works are extant.

Concerning PHYSICS, the doctrine of Democritus was as follows:† nothing can ever be produced from that which has no existence; nor can any thing which exists be ever annihilated. Whatever exists must therefore owe its being to necessary and self-existent principles. The first principles of all new things are two, atoms and vacuum. For bodies must consist of both these, since they cannot be divided till they are reduced to nothing. Neither of these principles is produced from the other. They are both infinite, atoms in number, vacuum in magnitude. Atoms † are solid, and the only beings; vacuum, or entire space, can neither be said to be existent nor non-existent, being neither corporeal nor incorporeal. Atoms have the properties of figure, magnitude, motion, and weight, being heavy in proportion to their bulk. In figure they are various; some are angular, others not so; some circular, others curved, others plain; some smooth; others rough; some hooked, others pointed. With respect to magnitude, they are too small to be singly visible, but are of different sizes; they are perfectly solid, indivisible, and unalterable.

* Laert. l. ix. sect. 34.

† Pomp. Me'a, l. ii. c. 2. Solin. c. 10. Cic. ad Attic. l. iv. Ep. 16. Juv. Sat. ix. v. 49. Mart. l. ix. Ep. 25.

‡ B. C. 460.

§ L. iv. c. 20.

|| Laert. Suid. Plin. Hist. N. l. xviii. c. 35. Athen. l. iv. p. 168.

¶ Plin. N. H. l. xviii. c. 6. Tertull. de Anim. c. 27. Clem. Al. Pædag. l. ii. p. 193.

** Laert. sect. 39—43. Diodor. Sec. lib. xiv. Cic. de Senect. c. 7. Luc. de Longæv. t. ii. p. 829. Athen. l. ii. p. 46. Suidas.

* Laert. l. c. Arist. Phys. l. i. c. 6. l. iii. c. 4. Cic. Acad. Qu. l. iv. c. 37.

† Arist. Metaph. l. i. c. 4. Laert. Arist. de Gener. l. i. c. 1. l. v. c. 8. Phys. l. i. c. 6. l. viii. c. 1. De Cælo, l. iii. c. 4. Pseud. Or. c. xiii. p. 91. Cic. de Nat. D. l. i. c. 24. De Fin. l. i. c. 6. Plut. Pl. Ph. l. i. c. 16. l. iv. c. 4.

These atoms, or first corpuseles, have been eternally moving in infinite vacuum or space, where there is neither high nor low, middle nor end.* Their motion is of one kind, that which perpetually deviates from a right line. By their continual and rapid motion, collisions are produced which occasion innumerable combinations of particles, whence arise the various forms of things. The natural necessity, by which the primary particles are thus moved and united, is the only fate by which the world is created or governed. The system of nature is one, consisting of parts, which differ only in their figure, order, and situation. The production of an organised body takes place when those atoms, which are in their nature fitted to form that body, happen to be suitably arranged: if this arrangement be diversified, alteration takes place; if it be entirely destroyed, dissolution.

The moral doctrine of Democritus,† like that of Epicurus, afterwards to be considered, makes the enjoyment of a tranquil state of mind, the great end of life, and consequently teaches moderation as the first law of wisdom. At the same time this philosopher held, that there is nothing naturally becoming or base in human actions, but that every distinction of this nature arises from custom or civil institutions, and that laws are framed to curb the natural propensity of mankind to injure one another. This latter tenet nearly coincides with the modern doctrine of Hobbes. The similarity between the ethics of Democritus and Epicurus renders it unnecessary to enter into further particulars on this head at present. We shall therefore only add a few of the most valuable MAXIMS which have been ascribed to Democritus:—‡ he who subdues his passions is more heroic than he who vanquishes an enemy; yet there are men who, whilst they command nations, are slaves to pleasure. It is criminal, not only to do mischief, but to wish it. He who enjoys what he has, without regretting the want of what he has not, is a happy man. We are most delighted with those pleasures which we have the fullest opportunity of enjoying. The sweetest things become the most bitter by excess. Do nothing shameful, though you are alone; revere yourself more than all other men. A man must either be good, or seem to be so. Every country is open to a wise man, for he is a citizen of the world. It is better for fools to be governed, than to govern. Rulers are chosen, not to do ill, but good. By desiring little, a poor man makes himself rich. A

cheerful man is happy, though he possesses little; a fretful man is unhappy in the midst of affluence. One great difference between a wise man and a fool is, that the former only wishes for what he may possibly obtain, the latter desires impossibilities. It is the office of prudence, where it is possible, to prevent injuries; but where this cannot be done, a wise regard to our own tranquillity will preserve us from revenging them.

Democritus had many disciples. Of these the most celebrated was PROTAGORAS, of Abdera.* In his youth his poverty obliged him to perform the servile offices of a porter, and he was frequently employed in carrying logs of wood from the neighbouring fields to Abdera. It happened, that as he was one day going on briskly towards the city under one of those loads, he was met by Democritus, who was particularly struck with the neatness and regularity of the bundle. Desiring him to stop and rest himself, Democritus examined more closely the structure of the load, and found that it was put together with mathematical exactness; upon which he asked the youth whether he himself had made it up. The youth assured him that he had, and immediately took it to pieces, and with great ease replaced every log in the same exact order as before. Democritus expressed much admiration of his ingenuity, and said to him, "Young man, follow me, and your talents shall be employed upon greater and better things." The youth consented, and Democritus took him home, maintained him at his own expense, and taught him philosophy.†

Protagoras afterwards acquired reputation at Athens, among the sophists for his eloquence, and among the philosophers for his wisdom. His public lectures were frequented, and he had many disciples, from whom he received the most liberal rewards; so that, as Plato relates, he became exceedingly rich.‡ At length, however, he brought upon himself the displeasure of the Athenian state, by teaching doctrines opposed to superstition. In one of his books he said, "Concerning the gods, I am wholly unable to determine whether they have any existence or not; for the weakness of the human understanding, and the shortness of human life, with many other causes, prevent us from attaining this knowledge." On account of this and several other similar expressions, his writings were ordered to be diligently collected by the common crier, and burnt in the marketplace, and he himself was banished from Attica.§ He wrote many pieces upon logic, metaphysics, ethics, and politics, none of which are at present extant. After having lived many years in Epirus,

* Arist. de Cælo, l. iii. c. 4. Cic. de Fin. l. i. c. 6. Stob. Ecl. Phys. l. i. c. 23. Cic. Ac. Qu. l. iv. c. 38. Sext. Emp. adv. Math. l. ix. sect. 113.

† Laert. l. ix. sect. 45, &c. Stob. Serm. 28, 37, 39, 44, 48, 117, 136, 139, 147, 249. Plut. de Inst. Lib. t. i. p. 12.

‡ Laert. Stob.

* Laert. Suid.

† Aul. Gell. l. v. c. 3.

‡ Laert. l. ix. sect. 50. Suid. Gell. Plat. in Theæteto, conf. ejusdem Protag.

§ Cic. de Nat. D. l. i. Sext. adv. Math. l. ix. sect. 18. Min. Fel. c. 8.

he was lost by sea on his passage from that country to Sicily.*

DIAGORAS,† a native of the island of Melos, was another follower of Democritus. Having been sold as a captive in his youth, he was redeemed by Democritus, and trained up in the study of philosophy. At the same time he cultivated polite learning, and distinguished himself in the art of lyric poetry, which was so successfully practised about that period by Pindar, Bacchylis, and others. His name has been transmitted to posterity as an avowed advocate for the entire rejection of all religious belief. It is easy to conceive, that one who had studied philosophy in the school of Democritus, who admitted no other principles in nature than atoms and a vacuum, would reject the whole doctrine of Deity, as inconsistent with the system which he had embraced. And it is expressly asserted by ancient writers, that when in a particular instance he saw a perjured person escape punishment, he publicly declared his disbelief of divine providence and from that time spoke of the gods, and of all religious ceremonies, with ridicule and contempt. He even attempted to lay open the sacred mysteries, and to dissuade the people from submitting to the rites of initiation. This public opposition to religion brought upon him the general hatred of the Athenians; who, upon his refusing to obey a summons to appear in the courts of judicature, issued forth a decree, which was inscribed upon a brazen column, offering the reward of a talent to any one who should kill him, or two talents to any one who should bring him alive before the judges. This happened in the ninety-first Olympiad‡ From that time Diagoras became a fugitive in Attica, and at last fled to Corinth, where he died.§ It is said, that being on board a ship during a storm, the terrified sailors began to accuse themselves for having received into their ship a man so infamous for his impiety; upon which Diagoras pointed out to them other vessels which were near them on the sea in equal danger, and asked them, whether they thought that each of these ships also carried a Diagoras; and that afterwards, when a friend, in order to convince him that the gods are not indifferent to human affairs, desired him to observe how many consecrated tablets were hung up in the temples in grateful acknowledgment of the escapes from the dangers of the sea, he said in reply, "True; but here are no tablets of those who have suffered shipwreck, and perished in the sea."

We again find the bigot's arguments, force and persecution, employed to put down Pythagoras and

Diagoras; it is always thus that superstition deals with her philosophical opponents; to banish or kill them, and to burn or destroy their works. Much easier these than answering their arguments.

Passing over the Heroicæan sect, which presents nothing very remarkable for our consideration, we come to the last in the series, and perhaps the greatest of all in respect of sound philosophy, boldness of investigation, and anti-superstitious tendency; the one to which we refer is the Epicurean, founded by Epicurus, a native of Gargettus, in the vicinity of Athens, born in the third year of the hundred and ninth Olympiad.

About the thirty-second year of his age, he opened a school at Mitylene, which he soon removed to Lampsacus, where he had disciples from Colophon. Not satisfied, however, with the narrow sphere of philosophical fame which this obscure situation afforded him, he determined to make his appearance on the more public theatre of Athens. Upon his return thither, he found the public places in the city, proper for this purpose, already occupied by other sects; the Academy, by the Platonists; the Lyceum, by the Peripatetics; the Cynosarges, by the Cynics; and the Porch, by the Stoics. He therefore purchased for his own use, at the expense of eighty *minæ*, a pleasant garden,* where he took up his constant residence, and taught his system of philosophy. Hence the Epicureans were called the Philosophers of the Garden.† Besides this garden, Epicurus had a house in Melite, a village of the Cecropian tribe, to which he frequently retreated with his friends. From this time to his death, notwithstanding all the disturbances of the state, Epicurus never deserted Athens, except that he made two or three excursions into Ionia to visit his friends. During the siege of Athens by Demetrius, which happened when Epicurus was forty-four years of age, while the city was severely harassed by famine, Epicurus is said to have supported himself and his friends on a small quantity of beans, which he shared equally with them.‡

The period in which Epicurus opened his school was peculiarly favourable to his design. In the room of the simplicity of the Socratic doctrine, nothing now remained but the subtlety and affectation of Stoicism, the unnatural severity of the Cynics, or the debasing doctrine of indulgence, taught and practised by the followers of Aristippus. The luxurious refinement which now prevailed in Athens, while it rendered every rigid scheme of philosophy, as well as all grossness of manners, unpopular, inclined the younger citizens to listen to a preceptor, who smoothed the stern and wrinkled brow of philosophy, and, under the notion of conducting his followers to enjoyment in the tower of tranquillity, led them unawares into the paths of moderation and virtue. Hence his

* Laert. Philostr. Vit. S. ph. l. i. p. 496.

† Suidas. Hesychius. Fabr. Bib. Gr. v. i. p. 554. Sext. Emp. adv. Math. l. ix. sect. 53. Tatian contr. Græc. p. 164. Athenag. Legat. pro Chr. p. 5. ed. Par. ‡ B.C. 416.

§ Laert. Suid. Cic. de Nat. D. l. iii. c. 37.

* Laert. Plin. l. xix. c. 4.

† Cic. ad Att. l. ii. Ep. 24. Juv. Sat. xiv.

‡ Laert. Plut. in Demet. t. iii. p. 96.

school became exceedingly popular, and disciples flocked into the garden, not only from different parts of Greece, but from Egypt and Asia. Seneca, though a Stoic philosopher, bears this testimony to Epicurus: * "I the more freely quote the excellent maxims of Epicurus, in order to convince those who become his followers from the hope of screening their vices, that to whatever sect they attach themselves, they must live virtuously. Even at the entrance of the garden they will find this inscription: 'The hospitable keeper of this mansion, where you will find pleasure the highest good, will present you liberally with barley cakes, and water from the spring. These gardens will not provoke your appetite by artificial dainties, but satisfy it with natural supplies. Will you not then be well entertained?'"

Epicurus, that he might prosecute his philosophical labours with the less interruption, lived in a state of celibacy.† In his own conduct he was exemplary for temperance and continence; and he inculcated upon his followers severity of manners, and the strict government of the passions, as the best means of passing a tranquil and happy life. Notwithstanding his regular manner of living, towards the close of his days, probably in consequence of intense application to study, his constitution became infirm, and he was afflicted with the stone. Perceiving from these marks of decay that his end was approaching, he wrote a will, in which he bequeathed his garden, and the buildings belonging to it, to Hermachus, and through him to the future professors of his philosophy. On the last day of his life he wrote to his friend Hermachus, informing him that his disease had for fourteen days tormented him with anguish, which nothing could exceed: at the same time he adds: "All this is counterbalanced by the satisfaction of mind which I derive from the recollection of my discourses and discoveries." He concluded with entreating his friend, by the affection which he had always shown to him and to philosophy, to take care of the children of Metrodorus. The emperor Marcus Antonius confirms this account, attesting that Epicurus in his sickness relied more upon the recollection of his excellent life, than upon the aid of physicians, and instead of complaining of his pain, conversed with his friends upon those principles of philosophy which he had before maintained. At length, finding nature just exhausted, he ordered himself to be put into a warm bath, where, after refreshing himself with wine, and exhorting his friends not to forget his doctrines, he expired. His death happened in the second year of the hundred and twenty-seventh Olympiad,‡ and the seventy-third of his age.]]

* Ep. 21.

† Theodoret. Serm. 14. Clem. Al. Strom. l. ii. ‡ B.C. 273. || Laert. l. x. sect. 24, &c. Cic. de Fin. l. ii. c. 30. De Fato, c. 9. Anton. de seipso, l. ix. sect. 42.

Epicurus is said to have written a greater number of works, from his own invention, than any other Grecian philosopher; but none of his writings have escaped the destroying hand of time, except a compendium of his doctrine preserved by Laertius, and a few fragments dispersed among ancient authors.*

Thus died this great and good man—evincing in his last moments the calmness and dignity of the philosopher, and giving the lie to the cant of priestcraft, that their nostrums alone are qualified to support mankind in the hour of death.

THE PHYSICAL DOCTRINE of Epicurus was as follows:—†

Nothing can ever spring from nothing, nor can any thing ever return to nothing.‡ The universe always existed, and will always remain; for there is nothing into which it can be changed. There is nothing in nature, nor can any thing be conceived, besides body and space. Body is that which possesses the properties of bulk, figure, resistance and gravity: it is this alone which can touch or be touched. Space, or *vacuum*, destitute of the properties of body, incapable of action or passion, is the region which is or may be occupied by body, and which affords it an opportunity of moving freely. That there are bodies in the universe is attested by the senses. That there is also space is evident; since otherwise body would have no place in which to move or exist; and of their existence and motion we have the certain proof of perception. Besides these no third nature can be conceived; for such a nature must either have bulk and solidity, or want them; that is, it must either be body or space: this does not, however, preclude the existence of qualities, which have no subsistence but in the body to which they belong.§

The universe, consisting of body and space, is infinite, for it has no limits. Bodies are infinite in multitude; space is infinite in magnitude. The terms above or beneath, high or low, cannot be properly applied to infinite space. The universe is to be conceived as immovable, since beyond it there is no place into which it can move; and as eternal and immutable, since it is neither liable to increase nor decrease, to production nor decay. Nevertheless, the parts of the universe are in motion, and are subject to change.]]

All bodies consist of parts, of which they are composed, and into which they may be resolved; and these parts are either themselves principles,

* Laert. sect. 39. Cic. de Fin. l. ii. c. 7. Fabr. Bib. Gr. vol. ii. p. 505.

† Laert. l. x. sect. 35, 36. 38.

‡ Epist. ad Herod. ap. Laert. l. c.

§ Lucret. l. ii. Laert. l. x. sect. 38. Euseb. l. i. c. 8.

|| Laert. l. x. sect. 39. 42. Lucret. l. i. v. 355. 420. 435. 445. 490. Semp. Emp. adv. Math. l. ix. sect. 333.

or may be resolved into such. These first principles, or simple atoms, are divisible by no force, and therefore must be immutable. This may also be inferred from the uniformity of nature, which could not be preserved if its principles were not certain and consistent. The existence of such atoms is evident, since it is impossible that any thing which exists should be reduced to nothing. A finite body cannot consist of parts infinite, either in magnitude or number; divisibility of bodies *in infinitum* is therefore inconceivable. All atoms are of the same nature, or differ in no essential qualities. From their different effects upon the senses, it appears, however, that they differ in magnitude, figure, and weight. Atoms exist in every possible variety of figure—round, oval, conical, cubical, sharp, hooked, &c. But in every shape they are, on account of their solidity, in-frangible or incapable of actual division.*

Gravity must be an essential property of atoms; for since they are perpetually in motion, or making an effort to move, they must be moved by an internal impulse, which may be called gravity. Atoms, by this internal force, are carried forward in a direction which is nearly but not exactly rectilinear; and whilst they pass through free space, this declination from the right line occasions a casual concurrence of corpuscles of different forms. By this percussion atoms will be turned out of their natural course, and various kinds of curvilinear motions will be produced. It will also happen that when one atom is reflected from another, and again repelled by a third, within a short interval, it will acquire a kind of vibratory or tremulous motion. Whence, in compound masses of atoms, the efforts of some of the particles towards motion in different directions being repressed by the efforts of others, a universal agitation must take place.†

The principle of gravity, that internal energy which is the cause of all motion, whether simple or complex, being essential to the primary corpuscles or atoms, they must have been incessantly and from eternity in actual motion.

The world, or that portion of the universe which includes the whole circumference of the heavens, the heavenly bodies, the earth, and all visible objects, is to be conceived as one whole, on account of the contiguity and relation of its parts: but there is no proof that it is an organized and animated body. Because the world is a finite portion of the universe, it must be terminated, and have some figure; but what this is, it is impossible to discover. The world is not eternal, but began

at a certain time to exist; for since every thing in the world is liable to the vicissitudes of production and decay, the world itself must be so too. This may also be inferred from the short date of history, and the late invention of arts.*

The Mind, or Intellect, that nameless part of the soul in which consists the power of thinking, judging, and determining, is formed of particles most subtle in their nature, and capable of the most rapid motion. In whatever part of the body the intellect resides, it exists as a portion of the soul, with which it is so conjoined as to form one nature with it; at the same time it retains its own distinct character—the power of thinking. The intellect has this peculiar property, that when the soul or sentient principle feels pleasure or pain, the intellect or mind always partakes of it; but the intellect may be affected with passions which are not diffused through the whole soul.

The affections and passions of the soul may be reduced to two—pleasure and pain; the former natural and agreeable, the latter unnatural and troublesome. Whilst all the parts of the soul remain in their natural state it experiences nothing but pleasurable tranquillity; but from the various motions which take place either in ourselves, or in the objects around us, the soul is liable either to be dilated by the approach of images suitable to its nature, and therefore pleasant, or to be contracted by contrary impressions. Voluntary motion is the effect of images conveyed to the mind, by which pleasurable or painful conceptions are formed, and subsequent desires or aversions are produced, which become the immediate springs of action.†

The doctrine of Epicurus concerning nature differs from that of the Stoics chiefly in these particulars; that while the latter held God to be the soul of the world, diffused through universal nature, the former admitted no Primary Intelligent Nature into his system, but held atoms and space to be the first principles of all things.

The science of Physics was, in the judgment of Epicurus, subordinate to that of Ethics; and his whole doctrine concerning nature was professedly adapted to rescue men from the dominion of troublesome passions, and to lay the foundation of a tranquil and happy life.‡ His *Moral Philosophy* which is unquestionably the least exceptionable part of his system, and which, when fairly rescued from the misrepresentations of his adversaries, will be found for the most part consonant to reason and nature, may be reduced to the following Summary:—

* Laert. l. x. sect. 38. 42. 44. 55. 56. 58. 59. Lucret. l. i. v. 268. 333. 486. 548, &c. l. ii. v. 729, &c. Plut. Pl. Ph. l. i. c. 3, 4.

† Lucret. l. i. v. 82, &c. l. ii. v. 217. Cic. de Fato, c. 10. 20. De Fin. l. i. c. 6. Laert. i. x. sect. 43, 44. 134. Plut. de Procr. Anim. l. iii. p. 79. De Fac. in Orb. Lun.

* Laert. l. x. sect. 51. 76. 88. Lucret. l. i. v. 1020. l. v. 106, &c. 319, &c. Cic. de Nat. D. l. i. c. 8, 9, 10. l. ii. c. 17. Lactant. l. vii. c. 5. Plut. Plac. Ph. l. i. c. 4.

† Lucret. l. v. 289, &c. l. iv. 856. 879. Laert. l. x. sect. 34. 127. 139.

‡ Epist. ad Menæceus, ap. Laert. l. x. sect. 132.

FREE-THINKERS' INFORMATION FOR THE PEOPLE.

The end of living, or the ultimate good which is to be sought for its own sake, according to the universal opinion of mankind, is happiness; yet men, for the most part, fail in the pursuit of this end, either because they do not form a right idea of the nature of happiness, or because they do not make use of proper means to attain it. Since it is every man's interest to be happy through the whole of life, it is the wisdom of every one to employ philosophy in the search of felicity without delay; and there cannot be a greater folly than to be always beginning to live.*

The happiness which belongs to man is that state in which he enjoys as many of the good things, and suffers as few of the evils, incident to human nature, as possible, passing his days in a smooth course of permanent tranquillity.† A wise man, though deprived of sight or hearing, may experience happiness in the enjoyment of the good things which yet remain; and when suffering torture, or labouring under some painful disease, can mitigate the anguish by patience, and can enjoy in his afflictions the consciousness of his own constancy. But it is impossible that perfect happiness can be possessed without the pleasure which attends freedom from pain, and the enjoyment of the good things of life. Pleasure is in its nature good, as pain is in its nature evil; the one is therefore to be pursued, and the other to be avoided, for its own sake. Pleasure or pain is not only good or evil in itself, but the measure of what is good or evil in every object of desire or aversion; for the ultimate reason why we pursue one thing and avoid another is, because we expect pleasure from the former, and apprehend pain from the latter. If we sometimes decline a present pleasure, it is not because we are averse to pleasure itself, but because we conceive that in the present instance it will be necessarily connected with a greater pain. In like manner, if we sometimes voluntarily submit to a present pain, it is because we judge that it is necessarily connected with a greater pleasure. Although all pleasure is essentially good, and all pain essentially evil, it does not necessarily follow, that in every single instance the one ought to be pursued, and the other ought to be avoided; but reason is to be employed in distinguishing and comparing the nature and degrees of each, that the result may be a wise choice of that which shall appear to be, upon the whole, good. That pleasure is the first good, appears from the inclination which every animal from its birth discovers to pursue pleasure and avoid pain, and is confirmed by the universal experience of mankind, who are incited to action by no other principle than the desire of avoiding pain, or obtaining pleasure ‡

There are two kinds of pleasure; one consisting in a state of rest, in which both body and mind are undisturbed by any kind of pain; the other arising from an agreeable agitation of the senses, producing a correspondent emotion in the soul. It is upon the former of these that the enjoyment of life chiefly depends. Happiness may therefore be said to consist in bodily ease and mental tranquillity. When pleasure is asserted to be the end of living, we are not then to understand that violent kind of delight, or joy, which arises from the gratification of the senses and passions, but merely that placid state of mind which results from the absence of every cause of pain or uneasiness.

Moderation in the pursuit of honours or riches is the only security against disappointment and vexation. A wise man, therefore, will prefer the simplicity of rustic life to the magnificence of courts. Future events a wise man will consider as uncertain, and will therefore neither suffer himself to be elated with confident expectation, nor to be depressed by doubt or despair; for both are equally destructive of tranquillity. It will contribute to the enjoyment of life to consider death as the perfect termination of a happy life, which it becomes us to close like satisfied guests, neither regretting the past, nor anxious for the future.*

Justice respects man as living in society, and is the common bond without which no society can subsist. *This virtue, like the rest, derives its value from its tendency to promote the happiness of life.* Not only is it never injurious to the man who practises it, but nourishes in his mind calm reflections and pleasant hopes; whereas it is impossible that the mind in which injustice dwells should not be full of disquietude.† Since it is impossible that iniquitous actions should promote the enjoyment of life as much as remorse of conscience, legal penalties, and public disgrace, must increase its troubles, every one who follows the dictates of sound reason will practise the virtues of justice, equity, and fidelity.‡

After the death of Epicurus, § the charge of his school devolved by will, as was before observed, upon his friend Hermachus. It was continued in succession by Polystratus, Basilides, Protarchus, and others, concerning whom nothing memorable remains.

Another branch of the Italic school of philosophy yet remains to be noticed, if indeed a sect which professed no tenets could deserve to be ranked among philosophers; the Pyrrhonic, so called from Pyrrho, its founder. From the leading character of this sect which was, that it called in question the truth of every system of opinions,

* Laert. l. x. sect. 118—122. Stob. Serm. 78. p. 281. † Cic de Fin. l. i. c. 10.

‡ Laert. sect. 118—137. Cic. Tusc. Qu. l. ii. c. 7. l. v. c. 33. De Fin. l. i. c. 9, 10.

* Laert. sect. 118—130. 144. 146. Lucrct. l. v. v, 1428, &c. Cic. de Fin. l. i. c. 21.

† Cic. de Fin. l. i. ‡ Laert. sect. 120,

§ Laert. l. x. sect. 25. Suidas.

adopted by other sects, and held no other settled opinion, but that everything is uncertain, it has also been called the Sceptical sect.* On account of the similarity of the opinions of this sect, and those of the Platonic school in the Middle and New Academy, it happened, that many of the real followers of Pyrrho chose to screen themselves from the reproach of universal scepticism by calling themselves Academics; whence the appellation of Pyrrhonists fell into disuse, while the doctrine of Pyrrho had still many advocates.†

Pyrrho† was a native of Elea. In his youth he practised the art of painting, but either through disinclination to this art, or because his mind aspired to higher pursuits, he passed over from the school of painting to that of philosophy. He studied and admired the writings of Democritus, and had, as his first preceptor, Bryson the son of Stilpo, a disciple of Clinomachus. After this he became a disciple of Anaxarchus, who was contemporary with Alexander, and he accompanied his master, in the train of Alexander, into India. Here he conversed with Brachmans and Gymnosophists, imbibing from their doctrine whatever might seem favourable to his natural disposition toward doubting: a disposition which was cherished by his master, who had formerly been a disciple of a sceptical philosopher, Metrodorus of Chios.

Every advance which Pyrrho made in the study of philosophy, involving him in fresh uncertainty, he left the schools of the Dogmatists (so those philosophers were called who professed to be possessed of certain knowledge) and established a new school, in which he taught, that every object of human inquiry is involved in uncertainty, so that it is impossible ever to arrive at the knowledge of truth.‡

It is related of this philosopher, that he acted upon his own principles, and carried his scepticism to such a ridiculous extreme, that his friends were obliged to accompany him wherever he went, that he might not be run over by carriages, or fall down precipices. If this was true, it was not without reason that he was ranked among those whose intellects were disturbed by intense study. But if we pay any attention to the respect with which he is mentioned by ancient writers, or give any credit to the general history of his life, we must conclude these reports to have been calumnies invented by the Dogmatists, whom he opposed. He spent a great part of his life in solitude, and always preserved a settled composure of countenance, undisturbed by fear, or joy, or grief. He endured bodily pain with great fortitude; and in the midst of dangers discovered no signs of apprehension. In disputation, he was celebrated for

the subtlety of his arguments, and the perspicuity of his language. Epicurus, though no friend to scepticism, was an admirer of Pyrrho, because he recommended, and practised that self-command which produces undisturbed tranquillity, the great end, in the judgment of Epicurus, of all physical and moral science. So highly was Pyrrho esteemed by his countrymen, that they honoured him with the office of chief priest, and, out of respect to him, passed a decree by which all philosophers were indulged with immunity from public taxes. He was a great admirer of poets, particularly Homer, and frequently repeated passages from his poems. Could such a man be so foolishly enslaved by an absurd system, as to need a guide to keep him out of danger? Pyrrho flourished about the hundred and tenth Olympiad,* and died about the ninetyeth year of his age, probably in the hundred and twenty-third Olympiad.† After his death the Athenians honoured his memory with a statue and a monument to him was erected in his own country.‡

From this account of the life of Pyrrho, it is easy to perceive in what manner he fell into scepticism. It is in a great measure to be ascribed to his early acquaintance with the system of Democritus.§ Having learned from this philosopher to deny the real existence of all qualities in bodies, except those which are essential to primary atoms, and to refer everything else to the perceptions of the mind produced by external objects, that is, to appearance and opinion, he concluded, that all knowledge depended upon the fallacious report of the senses, and, consequently, that there can be no such thing as certainty. He was encouraged in this knowledge by the general spirit of the Eleatic school, in which he was educated, which was unfavourable to science. But nothing contributed more to confirm him in scepticism than the subtleties of the Dialectic schools, in which he was instructed by the son of Stilpo. He saw no method by which he could so effectually overturn the evils of sophistry, as by having recourse to the doctrine of universal uncertainty. Being strongly inclined, from his natural temper and habits of life, to look upon immovable tranquillity as the great end of all philosophy; observing, that nothing tended so much to disturb this tranquillity as the innumerable dissensions which agitated the schools of the Dogmatists, at the same time inferring, from their endless disputes, the uncertainty of the questions upon which they debated, he determined to seek elsewhere for that peace of mind which he despaired of finding in the Dogmatic philosophy. In this manner it happened, in the case of Pyrrho, as it has often happened in other instances, that controversy became the parent of scepticism.

* Laert. l. i. sect. 17. 20. l. ix. sect. 61. 69. Sextus Emp. Pyrrh. Hyp. l. i. c. 3. 19. Aul. Gell. l. xi. c. 5. Suidas. † Cic. de Fiu. l. ii. ‡ Laert. l. ix. sect. 58—61. § Sect. 62, &c.

* B. C. 340. † B. C. 288.

‡ Laert. l. ix. sect. 62—68. Athen. l. x. p. 419.

§ Laert. sect. 67.

The manner in which a sceptic arrives at an undisturbed state of mind is entirely casual. At his entrance upon the study of philosophy, he hopes to be able to distinguish true from false opinions, and thus to obtain tranquillity; but being held in suspense by contrary reasoning, he despairs of arriving at satisfaction, and concludes that no certain judgment can be formed concerning good and evil. Hence he is accidentally taught that there is no reason for eagerly pursuing any apparent good, or avoiding any apparent evil; and his mind of course settles into a state of undisturbed tranquillity. So Apelles, when in painting a horse, he had succeeded so ill in drawing the form, that, in vexation, he threw the sponge which he used for taking off colours at the picture, and by this accidental action formed the representation which he had so long in vain exerted his utmost skill to produce.*

Ten distinct topics of argument were made use of in the school of the Sceptics, with this precaution, that nothing could be positively asserted concerning either the number, or the force of the arguments which may be urged in support of the doctrine of uncertainty. 1. That on account of the variety which takes place in the organisation of different animal bodies, it is probable that the same external object presents different images to different animals. 2. That even among men there is a diversity both of mind and body, which necessarily occasions a great variety of opinions, every man judging according to his particular apprehension, whilst no one is able to determine the real nature of things. 3. That the different senses give different reports of the same thing; whence bodies may have different properties from those which the senses lead us to suppose. 4. That the same thing appears differently, according to the different dispositions, or circumstances, of the person who perceives it: whence it is impossible for any one man to pronounce that his judgment concerning any object is agreeable to nature. 5. That things assume a different aspect according to their distance, position, or place; and no reason can be assigned why one of these aspects should agree with the real object, rather than the rest. 6. That no object offers itself to the senses, which is not so connected and mixed with others, that it cannot be distinctly separated and examined. 7. That objects of sense appear exceedingly different, when viewed in a compound, and in a decomposed state, and it is impossible to say which appearance most truly expresses their real nature. 8. That every object being always viewed in its relation to others, it is impossible to determine what it is simply in its own nature. 9. That our judgment is liable to uncertainty from the circumstance of frequent and rare occurrence; that which happens every day appearing to us in a very dif-

ferent light from that in which the same thing would appear if it were new. 10. That mankind are continually led into different conceptions concerning the same thing, through the influence of custom, law, fabulous tales, and established opinions. On all these accounts, every human judgment is liable to uncertainty, and we can only say concerning any thing that it seems to be, not that it is what it seems.*

The Grecian philosophy was at first confined, as we have seen, within the limits of Greece, and the neighbouring regions, except the Italic school, instituted by Pythagoras in *Magna Græcia*. Several eminent philosophers, it is true, travelled into Egypt; but it was chiefly in the infancy of philosophy, and rather for the purpose of acquiring, than of communicating knowledge. But after Egypt, and almost all Asia, was brought under the Grecian yoke by the conquests of Alexander, the Grecian philosophy passed, as might naturally be expected, from the conquerors to the nations whom they had subdued. Alexander himself, who had been early initiated into philosophical studies, and inspired with respect for philosophers by his master Aristotle, enlarged the boundaries of philosophy,† by carrying with him, wherever he went, a train of philosophers, (among whom was Callisthenes and Anaxarchus,) whom he treated with great respect, and employed in conciliating the affections of the people to their conqueror. Notwithstanding the reverence which the orientalists unquestionably entertained for their ancient doctrines, there can be little doubt that, when Alexander, in order to preserve, by the arts of peace, that extensive empire which he had obtained by the force of arms, endeavoured to incorporate the customs of the Greeks with those of the Persian, Indian, and other eastern nations, the opinions as well as the manners of this feeble and obsequious race would, in a great measure, be accommodated to those of the conquerors.

Alexander, when he built the city of Alexandria, with a determination to make it the seat of his empire, and peopled it with emigrants from various countries, opened a new philosophy, which emulated the fame of Athens itself. A general indulgence was granted to the promiscuous crowd assembled in this rising city, whether Egyptians, Grecians, Jews, or others, to profess their respective systems of philosophy and religion without molestation.

* Sext. Emp. l. c. l. i. c. 10. sect. 36—163.

Laert. l. ix. sect. 79, &c. Aul. Gell. l. xi. c. 5.

† Plutarch. de Fort. Alex. t. ii. p. 346. t. v. p. 450. Ammon. in Vit. Arist.

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* Sext. Emp. Pyrrh. l. i. c. 12. sect. 26, 27. c. 18. sect. 31.

FREE-THINKERS' INFORMATION FOR THE PEOPLE.

"LET ALL HAVE FULL LIBERTY TO TEACH AND MAINTAIN WHATEVER OPINIONS THEY MAY CHOOSE."—*Melancthon.*

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THE STRUGGLES OF PHILOSOPHY WITH SUPERSTITION AND PRIESTCRAFT,
ILLUSTRATED IN THE HISTORY OF FREE INQUIRY.

ARTICLE IV.—ANCIENT EGYPT AND ROME.

THE consequence of the liberal arrangements of Alexander respecting religion, stated in the previous article, was, that Egypt was soon filled with religions and philosophical sectaries of every kind; and particularly, that almost every Grecian sect found an advocate and professor in Alexandria.*

The families of the Ptolemies, who after Alexander obtained the government of Egypt, from motives of policy encouraged this new establishment. Ptolemy Lagus, who had obtained the crown of Egypt by usurpation, was particularly careful to secure the interest of the Greeks in his favour; and, with this view, invited people from every part of Greece to settle in Egypt, and removed the schools of Athens to Alexandria. This enlightened prince spared no expense to raise the literary, as well as the civil, military, and commercial credit of his country. In order to provide in Alexandria a permanent residence for learning and philosophy, he laid the foundation of a library, which after his time became exceedingly famous; granted philosophers of every class immunity from public offices; and encouraged science and literature by royal munificence. Demetrius Phalereus, who was eminent in every kind of learning, especially in philosophy, assisted the liberal designs of the prince by his judicious advice and active services. Ptolemy Philadelphus adopted, with great ardour, the liberal views of his predecessor, and afforded still further aid to philosophy, by enriching the Alexandrian library with a vast collection of books in every branch of learning, and by instituting a college of learned men, who, that they might have leisure to prosecute their studies, were maintained at the public expense.†

* Plut. l. c. Justin. l. 38. c. 9. Athen. l. iv. p. 184. Porph. Vit. Plot. c. 16. Arian. l. iii. Q. Curt. l. iv. c. 8. Strabo, l. xvii. Amm. Marcell. l. xxii. c. 6. Joseph. contr. Ap. l. ii. De Bell. J. l. ii. c. 36.

† Diod. Sec. l. xviii. Pausan. in Att. Phot. Cod. 92. Elian. l. iii. c. 15. Clem. Alex. Stro. l. i. p. 341. Philostr. Vit. Soph. l. i. c. 22. Laert. l. viii. c. 46. Aul. Gell. l. iv. c. 2.

Under the patronage, first, of the Egyptian princes, and afterwards of the Roman emperors, Alexandria long continued to enjoy great celebrity as the seat of learning, and to send forth eminent philosophers of every sect to distant countries. It remained a school of learning, as well as a commercial emporium, till it was taken, and plundered of its literary treasures, by the Saracens.

Philosophy, during this period, suffered a grievous corruption, from the attempt which was made by philosophers of different sects and countries, Grecian, Egyptian, and Oriental, who were assembled in Alexandria, to frame, from their different tenets, one general system of opinions. The respect which had long been universally paid to the schools of Greece, and the honours with which they were now adorned by the Egyptian princes, induced other wise men, and even the Egyptian priests and philosophers themselves, to submit to this innovation. Hence arose an heterogeneous mass of opinions, of which we shall afterwards take more particular notice under the name of the Eclectic philosophy; and which we shall find to have been the foundation of endless confusion, error, and absurdity, not only in the Alexandrian school, but among Jews and Christians.

From Greece the principles of philosophy passed into Rome, after the subjugation of the former by the arms of the latter; and the different sects or systems embraced and defended by the leading minds of the Roman empire.

The rise of philosophy in Rome may be dated from the time of the embassy, which was sent from the Athenians to the Romans, deprecating a fine of five hundred talents, which had been inflicted upon them for laying waste Oropi, a town of Sicyonia. The exact time of this embassy, is unknown, but it is probable that it happened about the 156th Olympiad, or towards the close of the sixth century from the building of Rome, that is, 156 years before Christ.*

The immediate effect of the display which

* Cic. Ac. Qu. l. iv. c. 45. Plut. in Canton. Maj. Cic. de Senectute, c. 5. Aul. Gell. l. xv. c. 11. Cic. Tus. Qu. l. iv. c. 2.

these philosophical missionaries* made of their wisdom and eloquence was to excite in the Roman youth of all ranks an ardent thirst after knowledge. Lælius, Furius and Scipio, young men of the first distinction and highest expectations, discovered an earnest desire to enlist themselves under the banners of philosophy; and much was to be hoped for from their future patronage, when they should occupy important offices in the state. But Cato the Censor, whose inflexible virtue gave him an oracular authority among his countrymen, disapproved this sudden innovation in public manners, and philosophy was sternly dismissed † Not that Cato was himself illiterate, or wholly untinctured with philosophy; for he wrote a celebrated treatise upon agriculture. When he was a young man, in the service of Fabius Maximus, at the taking of Tarentum, he is said to have conversed with Nearchus, one of the disciples of Pythagoras; ‡ and, at an advanced age, whilst he was prætor in Sardinia, he was instructed in the Greek language by Ennius.§ But he was apprehensive that the introduction of philosophical studies into Rome would effminate the spirit of its young men, and enfeeble those hardy virtues which were the foundation of their national glory.

By this visit of the Grecian philosophers a spirit of inquiry was, however, raised among the Roman youth, which the injudicious caution of Cato could not suppress. The struggle between philosophy and voluntary ignorance was, indeed, for some time maintained; for we read that, in the consulship of Sirabo and Valerius, a decree of the Senate passed, probably in consequence of repeated visits from Grecian philosophers, requiring the prætor Pomponius to take care that no philosophers were resident in Rome.|| Some years afterwards, the censors, as if resolved at once to shut the door against philosophy and eloquence, issued a similar edict against rhetoricians, in terms to this effect:—"Whereas we have been informed that certain men, who call themselves Latin rhetoricians, have instituted a new kind of learning, and opened schools, in which young men trifle away their time day after day; we, judging this innovation to be inconsistent with the purpose for which our ancestors established schools, contrary to ancient custom, and injurious to our youth, do hereby warn both those who keep these schools, and those who frequent them, that they are herein acting contrary to our pleasure."¶ And this edict

* Carneades, Diogenes, and Critolaus; see p. 143.

† Plut. l. c. ‡ Ib.

§ Cic. Cato Maj. c. 1. 8. Lucullus, c. 2. Quintil. l. xii. c. 11. Aurel. Vict. de Vir. Illust. c. 34.

|| Aul. Gell. l. xv. c. 11. Suet. de Rhet. c. 1. Plin. Nat. Hist. l. xxix. c. 1. Conf. Bayle, P. Cato, ¶ Aul. Gell. et Suet. l. c.

was afterwards revived in the year of Rome 662,* under the consulate of Pulcher and Perpenna. But at length philosophy, under the protection of those great commanders who had conquered Greece prevailed, and Rome opened her gates to all who professed to be teachers of wisdom and eloquence.

The Roman intellect, deficient in the subtlety and acuteness of the Grecian mind, servilely adopted the systems of the Greek schools—adding nothing of their own originating. No new or better system of philosophizing was conceived—nor any improvements on the old. The greatest among the Romans, from Cicero downwards, were content to act as mere commentators on the Grecian masters; and each party adopted that school he conceived to be most agreeable to his notions of nature and morality.

To the Academics or Platonists belonged the great orators Cicero, Varro, Marcus Brutus, Plutarch and Galens. The Stoics, from its rigid notions of virtue, was embraced by many eminent Romans, of which Cato of Etica, Athenodorus, Lucan, Seneca, Epictetus, and Antimmus are illustrious examples. The Peripatetic, Cynic, and Sceptic systems were but little taught and adopted; the philosophic mind being principally divided between the Platonism, Stoicism, and Epicureanism which remains to be considered.

THE EPICUREAN PHILOSOPHY, in consequence of the violent opposition which it had met with in Greece from the Stoics, and the irregularities which had been practised by some of its followers, entered Rome under a heavy load of obloquy. This was greatly increased by the vehemence with which Cicero inveighed against this sect, and by the easy credit which he gave to the calumnies industriously circulated against its founder † Nevertheless, there were many persons of high distinction in Rome to whom the character of Epicurus appeared less censurable, and who were of opinion that true philosophy was to be found in his garden. Among these were Torquatus, Velleius, Trebatius, Piso, Albutius, Pansa, and Atticus; ‡ men of respectable characters in Rome, several of whom lived in habits of intimacy with Cicero || Atticus, particularly, was his bosom friend, to whom he wrote many confidential letters, afterwards collected in sixteen books, and preserved among his works. Fond of literary leisure, Atticus withdrew from the disturbances of the state of Athens, where he was highly respected by the citizens of every rank. Here he studied the doctrines of Epicurus, under Phædrus and Zeno the Sidonian. That he entirely devoted himself to this school, appears from many passages in the writings of Cicero, and from the

* B. C. 91.

† Cic. de Fin. l. ii. Tusc. Qu. l. i. 3. Fam. Ep. xiii. 1. Orat. in Pisonem, c. 28.

‡ Gassend. de Vit. Epic. l. i. c. 6.

|| Ac. Qu. l. iv.

particulars of his life given by Cornelius Nepos. C. Cassius, too, according to Plutarch, * is to be added to the list of Epicureans.

The true doctrine of Epicurus was not fully stated by any Roman writer till Lucretius, who with much accuracy of conception and clearness of method, as well as with great strength and accuracy of diction, unfolded the Epicurean system in his poem *De Rerum Natura*; "On the Nature of Things." That T. CARUS LUCRETIVS was a Roman is certain, but it is doubtful whether he was of the ancient and noble family of the Lucretii. He was born, according to Eusebius, in the year of Rome six hundred and fifty-nine. † Of his parentage and education little is known; but it is probable that he was sent to Athens, and there studied philosophy under Zeno the Sidonian, and Phædrus. Towards the close of his life he was often insane; and it was during his lucid intervals that he wrote his celebrated poem. It is addressed to his friend and patron Memmius: it was revised by Cicero, and is still extant.

It is a remarkable fact that the best Roman poets belonged to this school, as for instance, Lucretius already mentioned, and Virgil and Horace.

For example, Virgil makes use of the doctrine and language of the Epicurean school ‡

He sung, at universal nature's birth,
How seeds of water, fire, and air, and earth,
Fell through the void; whence order rose, and all
The beauties of this congregated ball.

And again:—§

Happy the man, whose vigorous soul can pierce
Through the formation of this universe!
Who nobly dares despise, with soul sedate,
The din of Acheron, and vulgar fears, and fate.

The predilection of Virgil for the Epicurean system may be also inferred from his intimate acquaintance with the poem of Lucretius, to which, in the course of his works he is frequently indebted. Horace through all his writing breathes the Epicurean spirit, and sometimes appears to confess his partiality to this school.

The Epicurean sect, though degenerated from the simple manners of its founder, continued to flourish through a long course of years under the Roman emperors. This was owing in part to the freedom of manners which it permitted, and in part to the boldness with which it combated superstition; but principally to the strict union which subsisted among the members of this school, and the implicit deference, which they unanimously agreed to pay to the doctrines of their master. || The succession of disciples in this sect was, as Laetius attests, ** uninterrupted,

even when other schools began to fail. In many places the doctrine of Epicurus was publicly taught; and at Athens the Epicurean school was endowed with a fixed stipend. There can be no doubt, therefore, that there must have been among the Epicureans eminent teachers of their system; and it may seem strange, that their names should not have been transmitted to posterity; but if the genius of this sect be considered, the difficulty will be obviated; for, such was the superstitious reverence which the disciples of this school paid to the decisions of their master, that they neither ventured to add to his system, nor even to exercise their judgment in writing commentaries upon it; their whole concern was, to transmit the tenets and maxims of Epicurus uncorrupted to posterity. Hence, whatever celebrity any of the preceptors of this sect might have attained during their lives, their names soon fell into oblivion. Among the learned men of this period, there were, however, some who held the memory of Epicurus in high estimation, and in many particulars adopted his doctrine, and who, therefore, may not improperly be ranked in the class of Epicureans. Of these the principal are, Pliny the Elder, Celsus, Lucian, and Diogenes Laertius.

CAIUS PLINIUS SECUNDUS, called Pliny the Elder, to distinguish him from his nephew Caius Plinius Cecilius, was born in the reign of Tiberius, about the year twenty-three, and is commonly said to have been a native of Verona. In his youth he took upon him the military character, and served in the army in the German war; but he soon turned the course of his ambition into the channel of learning, and by the indefatigable use of excellent talents acquired extensive and profound erudition. During the life of Nero, his dread of the savage spirit of that tyrant induced him to prosecute his studies in private. Towards the close of the reign of that emperor, he wrote a critical work on ambiguity of expression. Under the more favourable auspices of Vespasian, the superior abilities of Pliny had an opportunity of displaying themselves, not only in literary speculations, but in public affairs; for that emperor admitted him to his confidence, and employed him in important posts. In the midst of innumerable avocations, he prosecuted his studies with a degree of industry and perseverance scarcely to be paralleled.

With respect to philosophical opinions, Pliny did not rigidly adhere to any sect, but occasionally borrowed such tenets from each, as suited his present inclination or purpose. He reprobates the Epicurean tenet of an infinity of worlds; favours the Pythagorean notion of the harmony of the spheres: speaks of the universe as God, after the manner of the Stoics; and sometimes seems to pass over into the field of the Sceptics. For the most part, however, he yields towards the doctrine of Epicurus.*

* Plut. in Brut. t. v. p. 690 711. Cic. Phil. ii.

† B. C. 94.

‡ Ecl. vi. v. 31, &c.

§ Georg. ii. v. 490, &c.

|| Seneca, Ep. 33. Themist. Orat. iv. Euseb. Præp. l. xiv. c. 5

** L. x. sect. 9.

* Hist. Nat. l. ii. c. 1. 3. 5. 7.

The insatiable desire which this philosopher always discovered to become acquainted with the wonders of nature, at last proved fatal to him. An eruption of the volcano of Mount Vesuvius happened while Pliny lay, with the fleet under his command, at Misenum, his curiosity induced him to approach so near to the mountain, that he was suffocated by the gross and noxious vapours which it sent forth. An interesting account of the particulars of this tragical event is given by Pliny the Younger: * it happened in the year 79.

CELSUS, the adversary of Christianity to whom Origen replies, though in his attack he sometimes made use of Platonic and Stoic weapons, is expressly ranked by Lucian, † as well as Origen, ‡ among the followers of Epicurus. The extracts from his writings, preserved by Origen, at the same time that they prove him to have been an inveterate enemy to Christianity, show that he was not destitute of learning and ability. Celsus, besides his book against the Christians, wrote a piece entitled, "Precepts of Living Well," and another "Against Magic;" but no part of his writings are extant, except the quotations made by Origen. Lucian dedicates to him his account of Alexander the impostor. That Lucian's friend was the same Celsus, against whom Origen wrote, appears from this circumstance, that both Lucian and Origen ascribe to him the work against magic. Celsus was born towards the close of Adrian's reign, and was contemporary with Lucian under Aurelius Antoninus §

No doubt, some of the early Christians destroyed the writings of Celsus, and made Origen attribute words to him in the reply which might suit the purposes of the Church, and to ward off the blows which the sturdy Epicurean no doubt applied to the rank absurdities of the Christian system. Had he written on the other side, his works, we are sure, would have been extant; as it was, it was no doubt *convenient* to lose them, that posterity might be ignorant of the way in which it has been imposed on.

LUCIAN, the celebrated satirist, was a native of Samosata, on the borders of the Euphrates, and flourished in the time of the Antonines and Commodus. In his youth, his father, who was of low rank, was desirous to have diverted his attention from letters, and put him under the care of his uncle, who was a statuary; but, being unfortunate in his first attempts, he deserted his art, and fled to Antioch, where he engaged, not without success, in the profession of a pleader. He soon, however, grew tired of this employment, and gave himself up entirely to the practice of eloquence,

in the character of a sophist or rhetorician. In this capacity, he travelled through several countries, particularly Spain, Gaul, and Greece. At length, he passed over to the study of philosophy. Without rigorously addicting himself to any sect, he gathered up from each whatever he found useful, and ridiculed, with an easy vein of humour and pleasantry, whatever he thought trifling or absurd. Like Maximus Tyrius Themistius, and several other eminent men of this age, he united the arts of eloquence, and the graces of fine writing, with the precepts of philosophy.*

Photius, † and several modern writers, have ranked Lucian among the Sceptics: they might more properly have given him a place among the Socratics. But, in truth, there is no sect which he seems to have been so much inclined to favour as the Epicurean. He speaks of Epicurus as the only philosopher who had been acquainted with the nature of things, and of his followers as, in the midst of mad men, alone retaining a sound mind. Himself a sworn enemy to imposture, he preferred the sect which professed to annihilate superstition; and he dedicated his narrative of the impostures of Alexander to Celsus, an Epicurean. ‡

We must not close our account of eminent men who favoured the Epicurean sect, without mentioning DIODEGENES LAERTIUS, a writer, to whom the world is indebted for many facts respecting the history of philosophy. His predilection for Epicureanism is shown in the extraordinary pains he has taken to give an accurate summary of the doctrine of Epicurus, and a full detail of his life.

A short glance has already been given to the Egyptian or Alexandrian schools, which we resume, inasmuch as from thence originated many modifications or re-combinations, of old opinions, among which the Eclectic, as the most important and influential, demands our attention.

Upon the foundation of the Platonic philosophy, with an abundance of heterogeneous materials, collected from every other sect, was erected an irregular, cumbrous, and useless edifice, called the *Eclectic School*. The founders of this sect formed the flattering design of selecting, from the doctrines of all former philosophers, such opinions, as seemed to approach nearest the truth, and combining them into one system. But in executing this plan, they did nothing better than pile up a shapeless and incoherent mass, *rudis indigestaque moles*, not unlike that chaos, which they admitted as an essential article in their doctrine of nature. In some particulars, indeed, they attempted to

* L. vi. Ep. 16.

† Luc de Alexandro.

‡ Origen cont. Celsum, l. 1 p. 8.

§ Orig. cont. Cels. l. i p. 52. iii. 136 iv. 201.

206. 215. v. 249 vii. 342. Eabr. Bib. Gr v. ii p. 809. v. v. p. 219. || Suidas.

* In Revivisc. t. iii. p. 156. Apolog. pro Morced. cond. t. i. 385. Herod. t. iii. p. 219.

Luc. Hist. t. ii. p. 379. Conviv. t. iv. p. 366

† Hermot. t. ii. p. 170. Alex. t. i. p. 549—51.

69. 570. 84—1576. 58

‡ Cod. 128.

adorn and enrich the system with fancies of their own; but with what little success will sufficiently appear in the sequel.

The Eclectic sect took its rise at Alexandria in Egypt; a country which, in more remote periods, had admitted foreign dogmas and superstitions, particularly after the invasion of the Persians. Egypt having in consequence of the conquests of Alexander become a part of the Grecian empire, the Egyptian priests accommodated themselves, not only to the laws and manners, but even to the speculative tenets of their conquerors. That they might not appear inferior to the Greeks in learning, they affected to admire and adopt their philosophy. The Pythagoric and Platonic systems, especially, gained an easy admission into the Egyptian schools, on account of the respect which they paid to religion, and the opportunities which they afforded of reconciling vulgar superstitions and vernacular traditions with systematic science.

The confusion of opinions, which arose from this cause, was doubtless increased by the promiscuous concourse of strangers, who, at this period flocked from all quarters to Alexandria, bringing with them, from their respective countries, their different tenets in philosophy and religion. And the evil was aggravated by the return of a body of Alexandrian philosophers, who, under the troublesome and oppressive reign of Ptolemy Physcon, had been dispersed through Asia,* and who had there learned a new species of Oriental philosophy, chiefly derived from the Persian Zoroaster, which they found it not difficult to incorporate with the doctrines of Plato and Pythagoras.

The first projector of this plan appears to have been POTAMO, a Platonist. The practice of philosophising eclectically was indeed known long before his time. It had been formerly adopted, as we have seen, by several of the leaders of the Greek sects, particularly Plato, Zeno, and Aristotle; it had been not uncommon among the Alexandrian philosophers from the commencement of their schools; and it was followed, in the period of which we are now treating, by Plutarch, Pliny, Galen, and others. But Potamo appears to have been the first who attempted to institute a new sect upon this principle. Diogenes, Laertius relates,† “that not long before he wrote his Lives of the Philosophers, an Eclectic sect, had been introduced by Potamo of Alexandria, who selected tenets from every former sect.” He then proceeds to quote a few particulars of his system from his Eclectic institutes, respecting the principles of reasoning, and certain general topics of philosophical inquiry; from which nothing further can be learned, than that Potamo endeavoured to reconcile the precepts of Plato with those of other masters. As nothing remains concerning this

philosopher besides the brief account referred to in Laertius; an obscure passage in Suidas,* and another, still more obscure, in Porphyry,† it is probable that his attempt to institute a school upon the Eclectic plan proved unsuccessful. The time when Potamo flourished is uncertain. Suidas places him under Augustus; but it is more probable, from the account of Laertius, that he began his undertaking about the close of the second century.

Among the most celebrated preceptors of the Plotinian school and the Alexandrian sect, is PORPHYRY, a learned and zealous supporter of Pagan theology, and an inveterate enemy to the Christian faith. Porphyry‡ was, as we learn from himself, a Tyrian.§ He was born in the year two hundred and thirty three.|| His father very early introduced him to the study of literature and philosophy under the Christian preceptor Origin, probably whilst he was teaching at Cæsarea in Palestine.¶ His juvenile education was completed at Athens by Longinus, whose high reputation for learning and genius brought him pupils from many distant countries. Under this excellent instructor he gained an extensive acquaintance with antiquity, improved his taste in literature, and enlarged his knowledge of the Plotinian philosophy. It is, doubtless, in a great measure to be ascribed to Longinus that we find so many proofs of erudition, and so much elegance of style, in the writings of Porphyry.**

After the death of Plotinus, Porphyry, still remaining in Sicily, appeared as an open and implacable adversary to the Christian religion.††

* Suidas in Airesis, t. i. p. 656. et in Potam. t. iii. p. 161.

† Vit. Plot. c. ix. p. 108. Bibl. Gr. Fahr. vol. iv. p. 108. Olear. Diss. de Ph. Eclee. sect. 2. ‡ Ennap. Vit. Soph. p. 17. Suidas in Porph. t. iii. p. 158. Diss. de Vita Porph. Rom. 1630, Svo. Fahr. Bib. Gr. v. iv. p. 207. Porph. Vit. Plot. c. viii. 107.

§ Jerom (a) and Chrysostom (b) call Porphyry a Botanean: whence some have supposed (c) that he was born in the country of Basan, a part of Trachonites, in Palestine. It is more probable (d) that Batauea was a part of Syria bordering upon Tyre, in which a colony of Tyrians had settled: and if this was the place of Porphyry's birth, he might choose rather to call himself a Tyrian, than to derive his appellation from an obscure region.

(a) Pref. Epist. ad Galat.

(b) Hom. vi. in 1 Cor. p. 58.

(c) Cæs. Baron. ad A.C. 325. Le Moyne ad var. Sac. t. ii. p. 181.

(d) Stephan. in Ethnicis. Fabric. Bibl. Gr. v. iv. p. 131.

|| Ib. c. 4. ¶ Euseb. Ecc. H. l. iii. c. 19.

** Vit Plot c 21.

†† Euseb. et Hier. Conf. Lactant. l. v. c. 2.

* Athen. l. iv. p. 184. Conf. Justini, l. xxxviii. c. 9.

† Proem. sub. fin.

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Some maintained that in his youth he had been a Christian ; but of this there is no sufficient proof. It is not improbable that, whilst he was a boy, under the care of Origen, he gained some acquaintance with the Jewish and Christian scriptures. He wrote fifteen distinct treatises against Christianity, which the emperor Theodosius ordered to be destroyed. Many able advocates for Christianity appeared upon this occasion, the principal of whom were Methodius, Apollinaris, and Eusebius.* So vehement and lasting was the indignation which was excited against the memory of Porphyry, that Constantine, in order to cast the severest possible censures upon the Arian sect, published an edict,† ranking them among the professed enemies of Christianity, and requiring that they should from that time be branded with the name of Porphyrians.

The edict of Constantine against Porphyry and his followers was given in No. 5, on "The External Evidences of Christianity," and proves how keenly Porphyry must have exposed the Christian jugglers. This explains why the writings of Porphyry, like Celsus, are lost, and why we must look into the pages of enemies for the arguments it is said he employed ; a most suspicious quarter to expect information. O what an exposure Christianity would get were all the writings of its early opponents extinct, for we should then have the true origin and character of the system from those who witnessed its growth and progress, a matter at present impossible, from the great paucity of evidence. The edicts of the holy Emperors and Fathers, and the burning and destroyings of ghostly monks and friars, have covered a multitude of the early sins of the Church ; but the suspicion which it lies under in having destroyed all criminatory evidence is so fatal to its merits as to convince all rational men of its falsehood and impurity, and these are the parties we expect to convince in the present inquiry.

To this list of Alexandrian philosophers must be added the celebrated female HYPATIA,‡ whose extensive learning, elegant manners, and tragical end, have rendered her name immortal. Hypatia was the daughter of Thron, a mathematician of Alexandria. She possessed an acute and penetrating judgment, and great sublimity and fertility of genius, and her talents were cultivated with assiduity by her father and other perceptrors. After she had made herself mistress of polite learning, and of the sciences of geometry and astronomy, as far as they were then understood, she entered upon the study of philosophy. She prosecuted this study with such uncommon success, that she was importuned to become a public preceptress in the school where Plotinus and his suc-

cessors had taught ; and her love of science enabled her so far to subdue the natural diffidence of her sex, that she yielded to the public voice, and exchanged her female decoration for the philosopher's cloak.* In the schools, and in other places of public resort, she discoursed upon philosophical topics, explaining, and endeavouring to reconcile, the systems of Plato, Aristotle, and other masters. A ready elocution, and graceful address, united with rich erudition and sound judgment, procured her numerous followers and admirers ; among whom was Synesius, afterwards to be mentioned. But that which reflects the highest honour upon her memory is, that, though she excelled most of the philosophers of her age in mathematical and philosophical science, she discovered no pride of learning ; and though she was in person exceedingly beautiful, she never yielded to the impulse of female vanity, or gave occasion to the slightest suspicion against her chastity.

The extraordinary combination of accomplishments and virtues which adorned the character of Hypatia, rendered her house the general resort of persons of learning and distinction. But it was impossible that so much merit should not excite envy. The qualifications and attainments, to which she was indebted for her celebrity, proved in the issue the occasion of her destruction. It happened that at this time the patriarchal chair of Alexandria was occupied by Cyril, a bishop of great authority, but of great haughtiness and violence of temper. In the vehemence of his bigoted zeal, he had treated the Jews with severity, and at last banished them out of Alexandria. Orestes, the prefect of the city, a man of a liberal spirit, highly resented this expulsion as an unpardonable stretch of ecclesiastical power, and a cruel act of oppression and injustice against a people, who had inhabited Alexandria from the time of its founder. He reported the affair to the emperor. The bishop, on his part, complained to the prince of the seditious temper of the Jews, and attempted to justify his proceedings. The emperor declined to interpose his authority ; and the affair rapidly advanced to the utmost extremity. A body of about five hundred monks, who espoused the cause of Cyril, came into the city with a determination to support him by force. Meeting the prefect, as he was passing through the street in his carriage, they stopped him, and loaded him with reproaches ; and one of them threw a stone at his head, and wounded him. The populace, who were by this time assembled on the part of the prefect, routed the monks, and seized one of their leaders. Orestes ordered him to be put to death. Cyril buried his body in the church, and gave instructions that his name should be registered among the sacred martyrs. Hypatia, who had always been highly respected by the prefect, and

* Fab. Bib. Gr. v. iv. p. 199, et Syllab. Script. de Ver. Ch. Kel c. 3.

† Socrat. Hist. Eccl. l. i. c. 9.

‡ Suidas. Socrat. Hist. Eccl. l. vii. c. 15.

* Nicephor. l. xiv. c. 16. Synesii Epist. ad. Hypat.

who had, at this time, frequent conferences with him; was supposed by the partizans of the bishop to have been deeply engaged in the interest of Orestes. Their resentment at length rose to such a height, that they formed a design against her life. As she was one day returning home from the schools, the mob seized her, forced her from her chair, and carried her to the Cæsarean church, *where, stripping off her garments, they put her to death with extreme barbarity; and, having torn her body, limb from limb, committed it to the flames.* Cyril himself has, by some writers, been suspected of secretly prompting this horrid act of violence. And if the haughtiness and severity of his temper, his persecution of the Jews, his oppressive and iniquitous treatment of the Novatian sect of Christians and their bishop, the vehemence of his present indignation against Orestes and his party, and, above all, the protection which he is said to have afforded to the immediate perpetrator of the murder of Hypatia, be duly considered, it will perhaps appear that this suspicion is not wholly without foundation. Hypatia was murdered under the reign of the emperor Theodosius II. in the year four hundred and fifteen.*

We now approach a period of mental and moral embecility, in which the most fanciful speculations entirely engaged the human intellect. The growing influence of the Christian religion, and the gaining of power under Constantine and his successors, prostrated the inquiring and independent spirit which originated in the schools. Mere dialectic quibbles and theological dreams usurped the name of philosophy; physics abandoned her metaphysico theology; earth for heaven; and ignorance and barbarism gradually became universal. The fanciful doctrines of the Chaldean emanation; the reveries of Plato, and the absurdities of Moses and Christ, were jumbled together, and intellect run mad and wasted its time and powers in illustrating and commenting on these visions of disordered imagination. All that was good and useful in the Greek philosophy was shelved; science was entirely thrown aside; discussion forbidden; and persecution and intolerance the necessary results of the triumph of superstition, became universal. During the period when ignorance and barbarism prevailed through every part of the Roman empire, philosophy found an asylum among the Saracens, or Arabians; a people, who, for several centuries after the appearance of Mahomet, were scarcely less celebrated in their literary and philosophical, than in their civil and military character.

The appearance of Mahomet, and the promulgation of his religion, in themselves contributed nothing towards the progress of knowledge and philosophy. This impostor thought it necessary to keep his followers as ignorant as himself. That

he might, at one stroke, cut off impertinent contradiction, he issued an edict, which made the study of the liberal sciences and arts a capital offence. At the same time, to captivate the imaginations of his ignorant followers, and hereby establish his authority, he sent forth, in separate portions, a sacred book, to which he gave the name of the Koran, containing the doctrines and precepts of his religion. This book, which was chiefly a compilation, sufficiently injudicious and incoherent, from the books of the Nestorian Christians and of the Jews then resident in Arabia, and from the ancient superstitions of the Arabians, long continued the only object of study among the Mahometans. Their reverence for this holy book, the leaves of which they were taught to believe were communicated to the prophet by an angel from heaven, long superseded every philosophical and literary pursuit. Imagining that the Koran contained everything necessary, or useful, to be known, whatever was contrary to its dogmas was immediately condemned as erroneous; and whatever was not to be found in this sacred volume was dismissed as superfluous. Deterred by the fear of punishment from examining the foundation of their law, or opening their minds to the light of philosophy, the followers of Mahomet quietly submitted their reason to the yoke of authority. Add to this, that the violent spirit and military character of Islamism was in itself inimical to philosophy and science. A prophet, who propagated and established his religion, not by reason, but by the sword, would keep his followers too busily employed in war and conquest, to leave them leisure for literary pursuits.*

From these causes, philosophy, during the first ages of Mahometanism, found no protection in Arabia. But, in this period of thick darkness, when, among Christians, true science was lost in the thorny controversies of theology; and when, among the Saracens, it was trampled under foot by ignorance and bigotry; after the extinction of the dynasty of the Ommaïdæ, who trod in the footsteps of Mahomet,† the accession of the family of the Abbasidæ, or Hashemidæ, to the Caliphate, (which happened in the one hundred and twenty-seventh year of the Hegira, or the seven hundred and forty-ninth of the Christian era) proved the dawning of philosophy in Arabia.‡

From the beginning of the ninth to the end of the thirteenth century, eminent schools of learning flourished in the Saracen empire, among which the principal were those at Bagdat, Bassora, and Bochna, in the East; at Alexandria and Cairo, in

* Abulfar. Dyn. p. 99. 104. 110. Pococke, l. c. p. 121. 136. 162. 165. 166. Thophail Ep de Hai Ebn Yockpan. p. 14. R. Jehudæ lib. Cosri. p. l. sect. 5. Elmacin. Hist. Sar. l. i. c. 1.

† Elmacin. Hist. Sar. l. i. c. 7.

‡ Ib. l. ii. c. 1. Abulf. Dyn. ix. p. 123.

* Socrat. His. Eccl. l. vii. c. 15.

Egypt; at Morocco and Fez, in Barbary; and in several cities of Spain. The college at Bagdat was so flourishing at the beginning of the twelfth century, that it contained six thousand men, including masters and scholars. In that of Bassora, the members of the society formed a sect for correcting the corruptions which had crept into Islamism, which they acknowledged could not be purged away without the aid of philosophy. At Cairo, where, about the year 1000, twenty schools were instituted, the philosophy of Aristotle was taught to great crowds of pupils from all parts of the world. The schools of Africa and Spain were distinguished by the name of Averroes, Avicenna, and other eminent philosophers, at a period when barbarism universally prevailed among the Western Christians. Many of these colleges were large and magnificent buildings, liberally endowed, furnished with valuable libraries, and adorned with learned professors of languages, mathematics, astronomy, and philosophy.*

Of all the Arabian philosophers and physicians, the most celebrated was AVERROES,† a philosopher. Averroes was born about the middle of the twelfth century, of a noble family at Corduba, the capital of the Saracen dominions in Spain. He was early instructed in the Islamic law, and, after the usual manner of the Arabian schools, united with the study of Mahometan theology that of the Aristotelian philosophy. These studies he pursued under Thophail, and became a follower of the sect of the Asharites. Under Avenzoar he studied the science of medicine, and under Ibnu-Saig he made himself master of the mathematical sciences. Thus qualified, he was chosen, upon his father's demise, to the chief magistracy of Corduba. The fame of his extraordinary erudition and talents soon afterwards reached the Caliph Jacob Al-Mansor, king of Mauritania, the third of the Almohadean dynasty, who had built a magnificent school at Morocco;‡ and that prince appointed him supreme magistrate and priest of Morocco and all Mauritania, allowing him still to retain his former honours. Having left a temporary substitute at Corduba, he went to Morocco, and remained there till he had appointed, through the kingdom, judges well skilled in the Mahometan law, and settled the whole plan of administration; after which he returned home, and resumed his offices.§

This rapid advancement of Averroes brought upon him the envy of his rivals at Corduba; and they conspired to lodge an accusation against him, for an heretical desertion of the true Mahometan faith. For this purpose, they engaged several young

persons, among their dependants, to apply to him for instruction in philosophy. Averroes, who was easy of access, and always desirous of communicating knowledge, complied with their request, and thus fell into the snare which had been laid for him. His new pupils were very industrious in taking minutes of every tenet or opinion advanced by their preceptor, which appeared to contradict the established system of Mahometan theology. These minutes they framed into a charge of heresy, and attested upon oath that they had been fairly taken from his lips. The charge was signed by a hundred witnesses. The Caliph listened to the accusation, and punished Averroes, by declaring him heterodox, confiscating his goods, and commanding him for the future to remain among the Jews, who inhabited the precincts of Corduba, where he remained an object of general persecution and obloquy. Even the boys in the streets pelted him with stones, when he went up to the mosque in the city to perform his devotions. His pupil, Maimonides, that he might not be under the necessity of violating the laws of friendship and gratitude, by joining the general cry against Averroes, left Corduba. From this unpleasant situation Averroes at last found means to escape. He fled to Fez; but he had been there only a few days, when he was discovered by the magistrate, and committed to prison. The report of his flight from Corduba was soon carried to the king, who immediately called a council of divines and lawyers, to determine in what manner this heretic should be treated. The members of the council were not agreed in opinion. Some strenuously maintained, that a man who held opinions so contrary to the law of the prophet deserved death. Others thought, that much mischief, arising from the dissatisfaction of those among the infidels who were inclined to favour him, might be avoided, by only requiring from the culprit a public penance and recantation of his errors. The milder opinion prevailed; and Averroes was brought out of prison to the gate of the mosque, and placed upon the upper step, with his head bare, at the time of public prayers, and every one, as he passed into the mosque, was allowed to spit upon his face.

The treatment of Averroes is another evidence, that superstition is the same in principle in all countries, by whatever name it may be known; all religions laying claim to exclusive divine protection must be persecuting and intolerant. With the few exceptions we have furnished of Saracenic philosophy, we have a thousand years of barbarism and ignorance, a retrogression of the march of intellect, from the breaking up of the Roman empire to the revival of learning.

* Abulf. p. 217. 230. Benj. Tuddensis Itin. p. 121. Leo Afr. Hist. Afr. l. viii. 267, 272. Elmacin. l. i. c. 13. Toletan. Hist. Ar. c. 9. 12.

† Leo Afr. c. 20. N. Anton. l. c. t. ii. p. 243. Bayle. Pococke Spec. p. 385.

‡ Leo Afr. Hist. Afr. l. ii. p. 60.

§ Leo Afr. de Vir. Ar. p. 280.

FREE-THINKERS' INFORMATION FOR THE PEOPLE.

"LET ALL HAVE FULL LIBERTY TO TEACH AND MAINTAIN WHATEVER OPINIONS THEY MAY CHOOSE."—*Melancthon.*

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THE STRUGGLES OF PHILOSOPHY WITH SUPERSTITION AND PRIESTCRAFT,
ILLUSTRATED IN THE HISTORY OF FREE INQUIRY.

ARTICLE V.—ANCIENT EGYPT AND ROME.

During the long period which intervened from the establishment of Christianity, in connection with temporal affairs, under that prince of assassins, Constantine, to the revival of ancient learning in the fourteenth century, the only name worthy of being rescued from oblivion, is ROGER BACON—a bright luminary amidst the universal darkness by which he was surrounded. He was born at Ilchester, in Somersetshire, in the year 1214. At Oxford, he studied grammar, rhetoric, and logic, under Richard Fisacre, and under Edmund Rich, afterwards Archbishop of Canterbury; after which, according to the custom of the times, he visited Paris, to attend upon the lectures of the celebrated professors of that university. But it may be easily collected from the particulars which are preserved concerning his early studies, that he was more indebted to his own genius than to any academical instruction: for he read history, learned the Oriental and Western languages, and studied jurisprudence and medicine—subjects little attended to at this period. The knowledge which he could not obtain from living preceptors, he dug, with indefatigable industry, out of the mines of Grecian and Arabian learning. After having been admitted to the degree of doctor, Roger Bacon returned to England; and in the year 1240, that he might prosecute his studies without interruption, devoted himself to the monastic life, in the order of St. Francis. He employed his time, not in the idle controversies of the age, but in useful researches into the properties of natural bodies. By the help of mathematical learning and experiment, he acquired a degree of knowledge in physics, which astonished his ignorant contemporaries, and brought upon him the charge of practising magical arts. His writings discover an acquaintance with the laws of mechanics, statics, and optics, with the chemical properties of bodies, and other subjects of natural philosophy, which could only have been the result of a judicious and indefatigable exertion of wonderful powers. He was certainly acquainted with the composition of gunpowder long before it is commonly said to

have been invented by Barthold Schwartz.* He speaks of a kind of unextinguishable fire prepared by art, which must have been a species of phosphorus. He was master of many other curious processes in chemistry; and would, doubtless, have produced still greater discoveries in this branch of science, had he not been drawn aside from the path of true science by the philosophical *ignis fatuus*, which led the philosophers of this time to attempt the transmutation of inferior metals into gold. He describes concave and convex lenses, and knew how to use the latter for telescopic and microscopic purposes. His mathematical and astronomical knowledge appeared in the discovery, which he made, of the error which occasioned the Gregorian reformation in the calendar, and in his attempt to square the circle.

The astonishing powers and performances of Roger Bacon, at the same time that they excited universal admiration, kindled a spirit of envy and jealousy among the monks of his fraternity, who industriously circulated a report that he held converse with evil spirits. This rumour, at length, reached the ears of the Pope, and he was obliged, in order to exculpate himself from the charge of necromancy, to send, in the year 1266, his philosophical writings and instruments to Rome, that it might appear to his holiness by what means he had been able to accomplish such wonders. The storm which was gathering around him was thus for a while dispersed; but in the year 1278, whilst he was in France, the same charge was renewed by Jerom de Eseul, the head of the order of Minors, who forbade his fraternity to read the works, and obtained from Pope Nicholas IV. an order that the author should be imprisoned. During his confinement, Bacon wrote a treatise "On the Means of avoiding the Infirmities of Old Age," which he addressed to the Pope. Through the intercession of some of his countrymen, he was at length released from his confinement, and permitted to return to England. He

* Morhoff. Polyh. t. ii. l. ii. c. 39. sect. 3.

passed the last days of his life at Oxford, and died in the year 1294, at the age of seventy-eight, leaving behind him many valuable writings, and an immortal reputation as, beyond all comparison, the greatest man of his time.

No fresh lights in the philosophical horizon made their appearance on the setting of this star; his rays were reflected by none of his immediate successors. Wordy disputations about metaphysical abstractions occupied the minds of all those that attempted to reason at all, and the most pompous titles were given to these word-mongers and quibblers; he who could make that which was dark and incomprehensible, more dark and incomprehensible, was held to be the greatest man, and hence we have "*Most Subtle Doctors*," "*Invincible Doctors*," "*Most Resolute Doctors*," and "*Angelic Doctors*" in abundance, but no interpreters of either physical or moral science.

In the meritorious design of banishing barbarism, and reviving a taste for polite literature, the Italian poet, DANTE ALLIGHIERI,* appears to have led the way. He was born at Florence, in the year 1265. In his youth he not only applied himself to the study of poetry, and other branches of elegant learning; but considering the period in which he lived, acquired a correct acquaintance with philosophy. According to his biographers, he was inferior to none of his age as a philosopher and a poet; in genius he was sublime, in language brilliant, and in reasoning accurate and profound. He studied physics and mathematics at Paris, and wrote a philosophical piece entitled, *Quæstio de Natura duorum Elementorum Aquæ et Terræ* † "An Inquiry into the Nature of the Two Elements, Water and Earth." But his chief work is his dramatic satire, "On Heaven, Purgatory, and Hell." On account of the happy influence which his example had upon the taste and studies of the age in which he lived, he may justly be ranked among the first revivers of learning and reformers of philosophy.

From the school of Dante arose FRANCIS PETRARCH, ‡ a star of the first magnitude in the Italian hemisphere, who greatly contributed to dissipate the darkness of the fourteenth century. Petrarch was born at Arezzo, in Tuscany, in the year 1304. His father, with many other Italians, who were discontented with their fortune, removed from Florence to the neighbourhood of Avignon, in France, where a Gascon pope had fixed his Roman see. After the example of his master, Petrarch devoted himself chiefly to polite literature. His father in vain endeavoured to draw his attention from these pursuits to the more profitable, but less elegant, study of the law. After various

occurrences in life (of which his amour with Laura was an interesting, and his poetical coronation at Rome was a splendid, part) he resided, during the later period of his life, sometimes in the celebrated vale of Vaucluse, near Avignon, and sometimes at Argua, near Padua, where, in the year 1374, he died, universally known, esteemed, and regretted. To Petrarch the Latin tongue is chiefly indebted for the restoration of its purity; Italian poetry for its perfection; and even philosophy for a considerable share of improvement. The science of ethics he studied with attention, and clothed many excellent precepts of morality with all the graces of pure and classical language. His treatises, *De Remediis utriusque Fortunæ*; *de vera Sapientia*; *de Contemptu Mundi*; *de Republica optime administranda*; *de Avaritia*; "On the Remedies of Fortune; True Wisdom; the Contempt of the World; Government; Avarice;" and above all the rest, *De sua ipsius et aliorum Ignorantia*, "On his own Ignorance of himself and others," are exceedingly valuable. In reading the moral writings of Petrarch, we visit, not a barren desert of dry disputation, but a fruitful garden of elegant observations, full of the choicest flowers of literature.

Several other Italian writers followed the footsteps of Petrarch, and may be deservedly mentioned among the revivers of learning and philosophy; particularly his pupil and friend JOHN BOCCACCIO,* born at Certaldi, in Tuscany, in the year 1313, who besides his celebrated *Decameron*, wrote a book *De Genealogia Deorum*, "On the Genealogy of the Gods," in which he treats of the fabulous philosophy of the Greeks with greater success than was to be expected in the age in which he lived.

About this period an event occurred, which greatly promoted the revival of letters in Italy and other Western parts of Europe. The oppression which all liberal arts and sciences suffered in the East, under the conquest of the Turks, obliged many eminent Greeks to forsake their native country, and take refuge in Italy. EMANUEL CHRYSOLORAS, † a Constantinopolitan of Roman extraction, having been sent in the year 1387, by John Palæologus, the son of the younger Andronicus, to solicit the support and protection of the Christian princes in Europe against the Turks, visited first Venice, and afterwards Florence, Rome, and other Italian cities. He remained in the West till his death, which happened in 1414. Other Greeks, driven from their native country by the hostilities of the Turks, followed the example of Chrysoloras, and found an hospitable asylum

* Erythræns Pinacoth. iii. p. 219. Blount. Cen. p. 437. Bayle. Trithem. c. 647. Fabr. Bib. L. Med. t. i. p. 682.

† Jovius Elog. c. 23. Bullart, Acad. Sc. t. i. p. 265. Oudin. de S. E. t. iii. p. 123. Fabr. Bib. Gr. v. x. p. 392.

* Hanck. de Rom. Scrip. p. ii. c. 42. p. 194.
† Fabr. Bib. L. Med. t. v. p. 675. Præf. Ed. Volphi, 1720.

‡ Trithem. de S. E. c. 622. Squarzacich Vit. Pet. Op. pram. Ep. Petr.

in Italy. These brought with them many Greek books, and some portion of ancient learning. The consequence was, that Grecian literature, which had lain dormant in the West for seven hundred years, was revived, and ancient books which had been for ages neglected, were brought to light, and with great avidity read and translated. Dante and Petrarch, and other learned men, having introduced a taste for literature, the princes of Italy entered into a laudable competition with each other, in affording countenance and protection to learning. Learned men from every quarter found a welcome reception at Rome, under the patronage of Pope Nicholas V. who was particularly disposed to encourage translations of Aristotle's works. The Medicean family at Florence expended their wealth, with great liberality, in providing a comfortable asylum for the learned refugees of the East. One of this family, Lorenzo di Medici, sent John Lascaris into Greece, to purchase at any expense the most valuable Greek manuscripts †. The effect of this judicious exertion of public spirit upon the state of learning was soon experienced: learned men, both Greeks and Italians, industriously devoted themselves to the necessary labour of multiplying copies, and furnishing versions of the ancient Greek writings; and the knowledge of the Greek language was every where disseminated. §

Following upon this important event, the great discovery of the printing press took place about 1445;—a discovery the effects of which are very clearly and eloquently stated in the following extract from Sir Charles Morgan's Philosophy of Morals:—

"The first application of this instrument was necessarily directed towards realizing the existing notions prevalent among the educated few, and disseminating among society at large that knowledge, such as it was, which had hitherto flowed in the narrowest channels. Black-letter books, the labours of the Caxtons and De Worde, are sought by the curious, and bought at extravagant prices, as specimens of the condition of the art in its earliest infancy: their real value consists in the exhibition they afford of the intellectual condition of the species at the epoch of the invention. Books of superstitious piety, scholastic divinity, magic, astrology, alchemy, and erroneous natural history, were among the first fruits of the press; and, therefore, it is certain they were the works in most general demand. If we look into the early printed books, to note the prejudices which occupied men's minds as established truths, and to sum up the errors which passed current in society, concerning ghosts, witches, the philosopher's stone, sympathetic medicines, magical and superstitious practices adopted for the cure

of diseases, imaginary animals, griffins, phoenixes, unicorns, salamanders—false history, false chronology, to say nothing of the gross misconceptions concerning the attributes of the divinity, and the scheme of nature—we find truth so enveloped in falsehood, and the natural condition of man so depressed by his mistakes and ignorances, that contempt involuntarily mixes itself with pity; and the imagination shrinks with disgust from a picture, which, like the anthropomorphic structure of the monkey, degrades us even in the reflection of our own superiority.

The revival of an ancient system of knowledge, belonging to another state of civilization, whose monuments had remained buried in the obscurity of neglected libraries, followed with a wonderful celerity, and occasioned the first steps that were made in the culture of mind. The vigour with which this process was conducted, forms a feature in the portraiture of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, remarkable amidst the many traits of intellectual elasticity produced by the excitement of this new cause. On this head it is sufficient to quote the labours of the Aldine press, whose products might each of them be considered as sufficient to occupy the life of their editors. An age of commentators and of critics ensued, in which, though the understanding was sharpened, the taste purified, and the intellect expanded by a new rage of inquiry, few very important additions were made to positive knowledge, by the agency of the press. To employ an expression not very new, it was necessary to get on the shoulders of the ancients, in order to look over their heads; while the rendering the classics legible, was naturally the bent of an age which immediately succeeded to their divulgation. Another cause, conspiring to the same consequence, was the safety, as well as the readiness of this road to honours and emoluments. It was less dangerous to correct the errors which were discoverable in Homer, than to denounce those that had crept into religion; and any interpolations might be more confidently attacked, than those of the founders of the church.

The impetus thus given to the human mind by this great discovery at length began to be felt in every branch of useful inquiry, and in none more than those which treated of the human mind. The Reformation was the legitimate result of this awakening of mankind, by the resuscitation of ancient learning, and the disseminating power of the press. The ancient systems of philosophy thus born anew were eagerly studied and adopted by the learned, and writers arose in defence of all the systems known to the ancient world. The philosophy of Aristotle found many defenders, of which the most eminent were Melancthon, the Reformer, Pompinatus, and Hermanus Coringius. Platonism was advocated by Cornelius Agrippa, Franciscus Patricius, and latterly by Cudworth, with great ability, in his

† Nic. Reusner in Icon. Lit. F. 6.

§ Ficin. Pref. in Plat. Bessario Didid. Vers. Metaph. Arist. Fabr. Bib. Gr. v. ii. p. 172.

"Intellectual system of the universe." The stoical system had supporters in Justus Lipsius; the Ionic in Claud Berigard; while the Epicurean system was asserted and defended with distinguished success by Gassendi.

GASSENDI was born in the year 1592, near Digne, in Provence, and studied first at Digne, and afterwards at Aix, where, at the age of sixteen, he was appointed teacher of rhetoric, and at nineteen, professor of philosophy. Although the authority of Aristotle was still acknowledged in almost all public schools, Gassendi, after the example of Vives, Ramus, and others, ventured publicly to expose the defects of his system. The lectures which contained his censures of the Aristotelian philosophy, delivered in the indirect form of paradoxical problems, were published under the title of *Exercitationes Paradoxicæ adversus Aristotelem*, * "Paradoxical Exercises against Aristotle." This work, at the same time that it gave great offence to those who still retained their predilection for Scholastic subtlety, obtained the author no small degree of reputation with several learned men, particularly with Nicolas Pieresc, the president of the university at Aix, through whose interest Gassendi was admitted to the degree of doctor of divinity, and created a canon of the church of Digne. A second volume of this work was afterwards published, the immediate design of which was to expose the futility of the Aristotelian logic. It was his first intention to pursue the plan still further; but the violent opposition which he met with from the zealous and powerful advocates for the authority of Aristotle, induced him to desist from all direct attacks upon his philosophy. He still, however, professed his attachment to the system of Epicurus, and defended it with great learning and ability.

In order to extend his acquaintance with the learned, Gassendi visited Holland, where his philosophical and literary merit soon procured him many admirers and friends; he formed an intimacy with the learned Mersenus, and wrote an elegant and judicious apology for him in reply to the censures of Robert Fludd, on the subject of the Mosaic philosophy. On his return to France, he was, through the interest of Cardinal Richliens brother, appointed regius professor of mathematics at Paris. In this university he also read lectures on astronomy, a science which he had studied from his earliest years. In this situation Gassendi acquired great popularity, and rose to high expectations; but after a few years, the fatigues of his office brought an inflammation upon his lungs, which obliged him to leave Paris, and return to Digne. Here he obtained some relief, and came back to Paris; but his complaint shortly returned, and he died in the year 1653. Just before he expired, he laid his hand upon his heart, and re-

marking the feeble state of its pulsation, he said to his attendant, "See how frail is the life of man!"

The sound judgment, extensive reading, and capacious memory of Gassendi, qualified him to attain great distinction among philosophers. He is ranked by Barrow among the most eminent mathematicians of the age, and mentioned with Galileo, Gilbert, and Des Cartes. His commentary on the tenth book of Diogenes Laertius is a sufficient proof of his erudition. With uncommon abilities for the task, he undertook to frame from Lucretius, Laertius, and other ancient writers, a consistent scheme of Epicurean doctrine, in which the phenomena of nature are immediately derived from the motion of primary atoms.

Gassendi wrote many treatises, which were, after his death, collected, and published in six volumes,* by Sorbier. Among these, one of the most valuable is his "Life of Epicurus," in which he undertakes to rescue that philosopher from the load of calumny under which his memory had for many ages lain, as well as to give a fair and impartial representation of his doctrine.

The most celebrated followers of Gassendi were FRANCIS BERNIER,† a physician of Montpellier, who, besides his "Travels into the East," wrote an "Abridgment of Gassendi's Philosophy;"‡ WALTER CHARLTON, an Englishman, who wrote a treatise entitled *Physiologia Epicuro-Gassendo-Charletoniana*,§ in which he attempts to establish natural science upon atomic principles. A similar treatise was published by G. B. DE SANCTO ROMANO, a physician at Paris, under the title of *Physica a Scholasticis Tricis liberata*,|| "Physics rescued from Scholastic Jargon."

The doctrine of atoms and a vacuum has been embraced by the most eminent modern philosophers. Huygens applies it to explain the cause of gravitation, and Newton admits it into his theory of natural philosophy.¶

We now approach the period from which the beginning of Modern Free Inquiry, irrespective of sects or schools, may be dated. The difficulties which had so long retarded the progress of useful knowledge were at length burst asunder by certain philosophers, conscious of strength sufficient for the undertaking, and anxious to extend the boundaries of human knowledge. Clearly perceiving

* Lugd. 1658.

† Budd. Hist. Ph. p. 376. Morhoff. t. ii. p. 273.

‡ Par. 1678. § Lond. 1654.

|| Lugd. Bat. 1684. 12º.

¶ Vidend. Mercklin. Linden. Renov. p. 554. Lettre critique et historique de la Vie Gassendi, Par. 1737. 12º. Dress. lii Bibl. Belg. Miræus de Scr. Sec. xvi. c. 237. Simon Bibl. crit. P. iv. p. 100. Stoll. Hist. Lit. P. ii. c. 2. sect. 48. Gerard. de Uries. Diss. de Gassend. Traj. ad Rhen. 1691. Regnaud Entretiens d'Ariste et Eudoxe. Bayle Lettres, t. iii. p. 829.

* Amst. 1649. Hag Comet. 1656. 8o.

the defects and errors of their predecessors, and deploring the abject state to which the human mind had been reduced by superstition and blind submission, they resolved to throw off the yoke.

The first person among the moderns who attempted any material innovation in philosophy, was JORDAN BRUNO,* born at Nola, in the kingdom of Naples. He flourished at the latter end of the sixteenth century, but the exact time of his birth is unknown. To excellent talents he added a lofty spirit, which arose superior to prejudice, and would admit nothing as true without examination; whence it is easy to conceive, that in the system of philosophy and theology then taught in the schools of Italy, he met with many things which he could not digest. Fond of retirement and study, he entered into a monastery of Dominicans; but the freedom of his opinions, and the boldness of the censure which he passed upon the irregularities of the fraternity, soon created him enemies, and subjected him to persecutions, which obliged him to quit his order and his country, leaving behind him all his property. In the year 1582, he withdrew to Geneva, where his heretical opinions gave offence to Calvin and Beza, and he was soon obliged to provide for his safety by flight. After a short stay at Lyons he came to Paris. Here, his innovating spirit recommended him to the notice of multitudes, who at this time declared open hostilities against the authority of Aristotle. In a public disputation, held in the Royal Academy, in 1586, he defended, three days successively, certain propositions concerning nature and the world, which, together with brief heads of the arguments, he afterwards published in Saxony, under the title of *Acrotismus*,† or, "Reasons of the physical Articles proposed against the Peripatetics at Paris." The contempt with which Bruno, in the course of these debates, treated Aristotle, exposed him to the resentment of the Academic professors, who were zealous advocates for the old system, and he found it expedient to leave the kingdom of France. According to some writers,‡ he now visited England, in the train of the French ambassador, Castelnau, where he was hospitably received by Sir Philip Sydney and Sir Fulke Greville, and was introduced to Queen Elizabeth. But though it is certain from his writings that he was in England, he probably made this visit in some other part of his life; for, about the middle of the same year in which he was at Paris, we find him at Wittenberg, a zealous adherent of Luther. In that city he met with a liberal reception, and full permission to propagate his doctrines; but the severity with which he inveighed against Aristotle, the latitude of his opinions in religion

as well as philosophy, and the contempt with which he treated the masters of the public schools, excited new jealousies; and complaints were lodged against him before the senate of the university. To escape the disgrace which threatened him, Bruno, after two years' residence in Wittenberg, left that place, and took refuge in Helmstadt, where the known liberality of the Duke of Brunswick encouraged him to hope for a secure asylum. But either through the restlessness of his disposition, or through unexpected opposition, he left the place next year, and went to Frankfort to superintend an edition of his works, which were now become very numerous, at the press of the celebrated printer, John Wechel; but before this design was completed he was obliged on a sudden, probably from an apprehension of persecution, to quit that city. His next residence (unless it was at this time that he visited England) was at Padua; there, the boldness with which he taught his new doctrines, and inveighed against the court of Rome and the clergy, soon brought him under the censure of the court of inquisition at Venice, as an apostate from the faith; in consequence of which he was conveyed as a prisoner to Rome, and, after two years' confinement, was condemned to the flames. This sentence was executed in the year 1600. But the burning of Jordano Bruno staid not the progress of liberal opinions.

That reformation in philosophy, which had been unsuccessfully attempted by Bruno, Cardan, and others, was happily accomplished by that illustrious English philosopher, Lord Bacon, who did more to detect the sources of former errors and prejudices, and to discover and establish the true method of philosophising, than the whole body of philosophers which many preceding ages had produced.

FRANCIS BACON, Baron of Verulam, and Viscount of St. Alban's, was born in London in the year 1560. His father was Sir Nicholas Bacon, Lord Keeper of the Great Seal, in the reign of Queen Elizabeth. It was the good fortune of Lord Bacon, that he appeared at a time when learning was commonly admired and cultivated among men of rank and fortune, and was even fashionable at court. The singular talents with which nature had endued him, and his early proficiency in learning, recommended him, whilst a boy, to the particular attention of several of the nobility, and introduced him to the notice of the Queen. Fond of school learning, that princess more than once amused herself with endeavouring to puzzle the young scholar with difficult questions; but his replies discovered such sound judgment, and were expressed in such manly language, that the Queen was exceedingly delighted with him, and used to call him her young Lord Keeper. At twelve years of age he was entered a student at Cambridge, and placed under the tuition of Dr. Whitgift, the master of Trinity

* Epist. Scioppii in Struvii Act. Lit. t. v. p. 64. La Croze Entretiens, p. 187. Steph. Jordan. Disq. Hist. Lit. de J. Bruno. Bayle.

† Wittenberg, 1588. ‡ Sciopp. and Bayle.

college, afterwards Archbishop of Canterbury. Here he applied with great ardour to the study of the sciences, particularly of the Aristotelian philosophy, which still continued to be taught in the English schools; but before he had attained his sixteenth year, he began to be dissatisfied with a method of philosophising, which was rather adapted to create disputes, than to promote the happiness of human life, and determined, if possible, to strike out some more promising way of investigating truth, than the Stagirite, or any of the ancients, had discovered.

In 1613, Sir Francis Bacon, (for James had, soon after his accession, conferred upon Bacon the honour of knighthood) was appointed Attorney-General, an office, the profits of which amounted to six thousand pounds a-year. This income, together with the wealth he had acquired by marriage and from other sources, might justly have been expected to have raised so eminent a philosopher above all temptation to servility and speculation. But ambition seduced this great man from the path of integrity. In order to obtain the honourable post of Lord High Chancellor of England, he descended to the meanest and most unwarrantable artifices. He endeavoured to destroy the popularity of his rival, Sir Edward Coke; he made use of undue influence in the House of Commons, and he yielded implicit submission to the will and humour of the prince. By these arts, in the year, 1617, Sir Francis obtained the seals, with the title of Lord Keeper; and in the year 1618, was created Lord High Chancellor of England, with the title of Baron of Verulam, which he the next year changed for that of Viscount of St. Albans. But neither the avocations of the court, nor the labours of his office, could entice him from his favourite studies. In the year 1620, he published a work on which he had been engaged twelve years, and which obtained him immortal honour, his *Norum Organon Scientiarum*,—"New Organs of the Sciences."

In the midst of Lord St. Alban's splendour and wealth, an incident occurred which proved ruinous to his fortune, and at the same time to his reputation. The king, in order to supply his extravagances, among other expedients, made use of illegal patents for monopolies: to these patents, the learned Chancellor, through the instigation of the Duke of Buckingham, had affixed the great seal. The whole proceeding gave much offence to the public: complaints respecting these unjust and oppressive monopolies were brought into parliament; and the Duke of Buckingham, to extricate himself out of this hazardous situation, persuaded the king to lay the blame upon the Lord Chancellor. The king, whose fondness for Buckingham exceeded all bounds, listened to the proposal, and even prevailed upon Lord St. Alban's to submit his conduct to public examination without attempting his own defence, or being present at the trial; promising, on his

royal word, to screen him in the last determination of the court, or, if that could not be done, to make him ample recompence. The consequence was, that the Lord Chancellor was, in 1621, accused before the House of Lords of bribery and corruption, and sentenced to undergo a fine of forty thousand pounds, to be imprisoned in the Tower during the King's pleasure, to be for ever incapable of holding any public office, and never to sit again in parliament, or come within the verge of the court. After a short confinement in the Tower, the King gave him his liberty; and about three years afterwards revoked the whole sentence by an entire pardon. Lord St. Albans was thus restored to his honours, and men seemed willing to forget that so great a man had ever been capable of offending. From this time, however, mortified no doubt by the recollection of his public disgrace, and the consciousness of having too well deserved it, he declined all concern in affairs of state, and devoted himself to retirement and study. It was during these last years of his life, which were clouded with care, as well as loaded with regret, that Lord Bacon wrote the greater part of his valuable works. After having been for some time in a declining state, he died in the year 1626, of a fever, which was occasioned by pursuing, with more application than his strength would bear, certain experiments respecting the preservation of bodies.*

Without dwelling upon a subject so humiliating as the inconsistencies and blemishes of a great and exalted mind, we will immediately proceed to consider Bacon in the light in which he will unquestionably be admired by the most remote posterity, as, among the moderns, the first great improver of philosophy.

Possessing by nature a strong and penetrating judgment, and having inured himself from his childhood to a habit of close attention and deep thinking, Bacon was capable of taking an accurate and comprehensive survey of the regions of knowledge, and of thoroughly examining the foundations of those structures which had hitherto been honoured with the title of systems of philosophy. His first great attempt in philosophy was his incomparable treatise "On the Advancement of Learning," first published in English, and afterwards translated by himself, with the assistance of some friends, into Latin.

The great design of this work was, to take an accurate survey of the whole extent of the intellectual world; to review the state of knowledge, as it then stood in its several branches, in order to discover how far science had been successfully prosecuted, and what improvements might still be made for the benefit of mankind; and to point out general methods for the correction of error, and the advancement of knowledge. The author,

* Rawley's and Mallet's Life of Lord Bacon. Bayle.

following the division of nature into the three faculties of the soul, memory, imagination, and understanding, classes all knowledge under three general heads, corresponding to these faculties, history, poetry, philosophy. Philosophy he considers as the universal science, which is the parent of all others, and divides it into three branches; that which treats of God, or natural theology; that which treats of nature, or natural philosophy; and that which treats of man, or human and civil philosophy. Natural philosophy he distributes into speculative and operative; including under the former head, physics, which treat of the general principles of nature, of the frame of the world, and of distinct bodies, and their common or peculiar properties; and metaphysics, which treat of form and final causes: and comprehending under the latter, mechanics, as deduced from general physical causes; and magic, or the knowledge of peculiar properties and powers in nature, and of their application to produce unusual effects. Mathematics he considers as an appendage to natural philosophy. The philosophy of human nature he views generally and specially; generally, as it respects the whole man, liable to miseries, or possessing prerogatives, and as regarding the mutual connection and influence of the mind and body; specially, as it respects human nature divided into body, the subject of medicinal, cosmetic, athletic, and voluptuary arts; and soul, whether rational or sensible, with its various faculties, their use and objects; and, as it respects civil life, comprehending conversation, negotiation, and government. Under the head of "The Use and Objects of the Faculties of the Mind," he includes logic, comprehending inquiry or invention, examination or judgment, custody or memory, and elocution or tradition, in all the forms of speech and writing; and ethics, treating of the nature of good, simple, or comparative, and of the culture of the mind, respecting its natural or accidental characters, and its affections and distempers. To all this the author adds a discourse concerning the limits and use of human reason in matters Divine.

From this brief analysis of this excellent work, the reader may in some measure perceive, with what compass of thought and strength of judgment Bacon examined the whole circle of sciences; and if the treatise be carefully perused, as it ought to be by every one who is desirous of methodizing and enlarging his conceptions on the general objects of science, the reader will not fail to admire the active and penetrating genius of the author, who alone could discover so many things, of which former ages had been ignorant, and hold up to posterity a light by which they have been so successfully guided into new fields of science. The numerous desiderata, which he has suggested in almost every branch of science, have furnished hints to succeeding philosophers, which have greatly contributed towards the leading object of all his philosophical labours, the advancement of learning.

At the same time that Bacon was improving philosophy in Britain, attempts of a similar kind, but with far inferior success, were made in Italy by Campanella, and whose natural genius prompted him to bold innovations.

THOMAS CAMPANELLA,* a native of Calabria, was born in the year 1568. From his infancy he discovered a wonderful memory and a singular genius. At thirteen years of age he was able to write verses with great facility. Having been early instructed in theological subjects, his first ambition was to rival the fame of the great Albert and Thomas Aquinas; and he entered his name in that monastic order which they had so much adorned, the fraternity of Dominicans. In the convent of San Giorgio, he engaged with great industry and ardour in the study of philosophy; but he soon discovered the sterility of the ancient method of philosophising; and, after in vain seeking for satisfaction from Aristotle or Plato, Zeno or Epicurus, he had recourse, when he was about eighteen years of age, to a modern master, who had professed to study the nature of things rather than the speculations of philosophers. The philosophy of Telesius about this time engaging much attention in Italy, Campanella read his treatise "On the Nature of Things," and was so much captivated by the bold and free spirit of this work, that he determined to leave the barren desert of the Aristotelian Scholastics, for the more pleasant and fruitful fields of the Telesian philosophy. He wrote a defence of Telesius against Antoninus Marta, who had undertaken the refutation of that philosopher's doctrine, in a work entitled *Pugnaculum Aristotelis*, "A Defence of Aristotle," and came to Naples to publish his work, which was entitled, *Philosophia Sensibus demonstrata*, "Philosophy demonstrated to the Senses."

Neither the power of his genius, nor the patronage of his friends, could, however secure Campanella from insult and persecution. To escape these, he removed from Naples to Rome, and afterwards to Florence, Venice, Padua, and Bologna. At last he settled in his native country; and, probably, in order to cover his innovations with the shield of orthodoxy, wrote in defence of the see of Rome. But, notwithstanding this precaution, he soon fell under suspicions which proved fatal to him. He was accused of being concerned in a conspiracy against the King of Spain and the Neapolitan government; and, after undergoing torture, was confined in prison about twenty-seven years, during a greater part of which time he was denied the privilege of reading and writing. As soon as this indulgence was granted him, he wrote several books, among which were a Treatise on the Spanish Monarchy, and his "Real Philo-

* E. S. Cypriani Vit. Camp. Amst. 1705. Nicéron. Mem. Lit. t. i. Erythr. Pinacoth. l. i. p. 41. Struv. Act. Lit. fasc. ii. p. 71. Stollii Hist. Lit. p. ii. c. 1. sect. 91.

sophy:" these he sent into Germany to be published. Many attempts were made by his friends to obtain his liberation; but they were unsuccessful; till Pope Urban VIII., a patron of learned men, prevailed upon Philip IV. of Spain to grant him an acquittal from the charge of treason. In 1625 he was set at liberty; but finding himself still insecure in Italy, he found means, under the connivance and favour of the Pope, to escape to France, where he experienced the favour of Cardinal Richlieu, who procured for him a pension from Louis XIII. He passed the remainder of his days in a Dominican monastery at Paris, where he continued to enjoy the society of many learned men; till, in the seventy-first year of his age, he expired.

Another Englishman who made bold attempts towards the improvement of philosophy, was THOMAS HOBBES,* born in 1588, at Malsbury, in Wiltshire. Through premature birth, occasioned by his mother's terror at the rumour of the approach of the Spanish invincible armada towards the British coast, he had a feeble constitution; but he early discovered uncommon vigour of mind, and made such rapid progress in learning, that while he was a boy, he translated the *Medea* of Euripides into elegant Latin verse. At fourteen years of age he was sent by his uncle to Oxford, where, for five years, he applied with great industry to the study of logic and the Peripatetic philosophy. He was then appointed tutor to a young nobleman, the son of Lord Hardwick, with whom he made the tour of France and Italy. This opportunity of seeing the celebrated monuments of antiquity, conversing with learned men, and becoming acquainted with the policy and manners of foreign states, Hobbes assiduously improved. Upon his return, entertaining a strong persuasion of the inanity and inutility of the Peripatetic philosophy, he resolved to devote his leisure to the study of the ancients, that he might collect what was most valuable from their writings. His high reputation for learning introduced him to the acquaintance of Lord Bacon and Lord Herbert of Cherbury, who engaged him to assist them in translating their works into Latin. The conversation of these great men excited in him a violent aversion to Scholastic learning, and an earnest desire of investigating truth with a liberal and independent spirit. It was a circumstance which greatly increased his love of philosophy, that in a visit which he paid to France and Italy, about the year 1635, he became acquainted with several eminent philosophers, particularly Mersenne and Gassendi, with whom he formed an intimate friendship, and after his return kept up a constant correspondence.

The dissensions in Great Britain, about the year 1637, rising to great violence, Hobbes, whose

connexions and principles made him a zealous advocate for the royal cause, rendered himself so obnoxious to the popular party, that he thought it prudent to retire to Paris, where he enjoyed the society of many philosophical friends. Among others, he was introduced to the celebrated philosopher Des Cartes, and began an epistolary correspondence with him on the nature and laws of motion, on optics, and other topics of natural philosophy. When Des Cartes first wrote his "*Philosophical Meditations*" on God and the human mind, and other pneumatological subjects, he submitted it to the examination of his learned friends, and amongst the rest to Hobbes, who sent his observations on the work to their common friend Mersenne, by whom they were communicated to Des Cartes. Hobbes, who was of opinion that thought may be a property of body, contradicted some of the first of Des Cartes' system. A correspondence was opened on the subject; but Des Cartes affecting to treat his opponent with some degree of contempt, as destitute of solidity and depth of judgment, soon dropped the controversy.

In the year 1650, Hobbes wrote his treatise on "*Human Nature*," which was, in the opinion of Mr Addison, his best work; and another *De Corpore Politico*, "*Of the Political Body*." The year following, he published his "*Leviathan*;" a treatise, in which, in establishing a system of civil policy, he represents man as an untameable beast of prey, and government as the strong chain by which he is to be kept from mischief. The whole body of the English clergy took the alarm; and the author was strongly suspected to be, in religion, inimical to revelation, and in policy, to favour the cause of democracy. The indignation which this publication excited, was probably in a great measure owing to the freedom with which it inveighs against ecclesiastical tyranny.

The suspicions which were on this occasion raised against Hobbes, dissolved his connexion with Prince Charles at Paris; and in 1653, he returned to England, and found a welcome asylum in the Devonshire family. From this time, declining all political disputes, he spent his days in philosophical studies, and in the society of learned men, among whom were Harvey and Selden. He published, first in Latin and afterwards in English, a treatise "*On Bodies*," in which he undertakes to explain the principles of nature. He wrote a treatise on geometry, in which he advanced many things contrary to the received doctrine of geometricians, and brought upon himself (whether justly or not, it is not our business to inquire) a severe censure, for attempting to correct what he did not himself sufficiently understand.

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* Life by R. R. 1685. Bayle. Wood, Hist. Ox. i. ii. p. 376. Blount, Cens. p. 1046. Epist. præf. Lib. de Cive.

FREE-THINKERS' INFORMATION FOR THE PEOPLE.

"LET ALL HAVE FULL LIBERTY TO TEACH AND MAINTAIN WHATEVER OPINIONS THEY MAY CHOOSE."—*Melancthon.*

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To complete his body of philosophy, he published, in 1658, "A Dissertation on Man," in which he advanced many singular opinions concerning the intellectual and moral powers of human nature.

After the restoration, Hobbes came to London, and was graciously received by the king, who admitted him to a private audience, and gave him a pension of one hundred pounds per annum. Through the vigilance of the clergy, he was, however, prevented from executing his favourite design of collecting and republishing his works in English, and was obliged to send them over to Amsterdam, where an entire edition in Latin was published.* Whilst the writings of Hobbes were reprobated by the general body of the clergy, and occasioned many learned and able replies, they were not without their admirers both at home and abroad. Foreigners of the first distinction visited him, among whom was Cosmo de Medicis, then Prince of Tuscany. Even in the public schools his doctrines had professed advocates; and Daniel Scargil, a Cambridge scholar, maintained some of his fundamental tenets in a public disputation, on which account he was expelled from the university. This circumstance brought so much odium upon Hobbes, that Bishop Fell, in his Latin edition of Wood's *Athenæ Oxoniensis*, thought it necessary to leave out the enlogium which the author has passed upon the philosopher of Malmesbury, and insert in its stead a severe censure. Wood, offended at this freedom, acquainted Hobbes, who wrote a letter in justification of himself to the author of the *Athenæ Oxoniensis*, which was published at Oxford. This produced from Fell a bitter invective, to which Hobbes who was now far advanced in years, made no reply. In his last days he retired into the country, and employed himself in translating Homer and writing the history of the civil war. This latter work Hobbes could not obtain the royal permission to publish; but it was sent into the world by a friend without his knowledge. He died in the year 1679, having lived to the great age of ninety-one.

All knowledge originates in sensation, and is produced by the pressure, either immediate or mediate, of external objects upon the senses. Sensible qualities are, in their objects, nothing more than the motion of matter operating variously upon the organs of sensation. Imagination and memory are the permanent effects of former impressions upon the senses. Thinking is the succession of one imagination after another, which may be either irregular or regulated with a view to some end. Every conception, being derived from the senses, is finite; we have, therefore, no idea of infinity; and God is an object, not of apprehension, but of reverence. No one can conceive of anything but as existing in some place, of some finite magnitude, and divisible into parts; nor can anything be wholly in one place and wholly in another at the same time, or two or more things be at the same time in the same place. Truth and falsehood are attributes, not of things but of language. The intellect peculiar to man is a faculty arising from speech; and the use of reason is the deduction of remote consequences from the definitions of terms. Science is the knowledge of these consequences. There are in animals two kinds of motion; one, vital and involuntary; the other, animal and voluntary. The latter, if it tend towards an object, is appetite; if it recede from it, aversion: and the object in the former case is said to be good, in the latter, evil. Appetite is attended with pleasure, aversion with pain. In deliberation, the last impulse of the appetite is will; success in obtaining its object, enjoyment. Moral qualities are those by which the peace and security of the state are preserved. Felicity consists not in tranquillity, but in a perpetual progress from one desire to another. The diversity of human characters arises from the different ways in which men pursue happiness.

The desire of investigating causes leads to the knowledge and belief of a first cause, the one eternal Deity, although the Divine nature is incomprehensible. From men's ignorance of true causes arises anxiety, fear, and superstition.

Nature has formed all men equal; whence

* Amst. Bleau. 4to. 1668.

FREE-THINKERS' INFORMATION FOR THE PEOPLE.

arises the universal hope of acquiring by violence whatever we desire, and the universal apprehension of suffering violence from others. The necessary consequence is, that a state of nature is a perpetual state of hostility, in which no individual has any other means of safety than his own strength or ingenuity, and in which there is no room for industry, because no secure enjoyment of its fruits. In this state, every one has a right to use his own faculties at pleasure for his preservation, and of doing whatever he judges to be conducive to this end; and since there is no property, there can be no injustice.

For the sake of peace and security, it is necessary that each individual recede from a part of his natural right, and be contented with such a share of liberty, or freedom from restraint, as he is willing to allow to others. This resignation of natural rights may either be a simple renunciation, or a transfer of them to an individual or body, by mutual consent, for the common good. The multitude, thus brought out of a state of nature, becomes one person, which is called the Republic or State, in which the common power and will are exercised for the common defence. The ruling power cannot be taken from those to whom it has been committed, nor can they be punished for mal-administration. If the supreme magistrate inflict any penalty on the innocent, he sins against God, but does not act unjustly. The interpretation of the laws is to be sought, not from preceptors nor philosophers, but from the authority of the state; for it is not truth, but authority that makes law; nevertheless, the king ought to interpret the law according to his own natural reason and conscience. Punishment is an evil inflicted upon the transgressor of the law, to this end, that the apprehension of it may bend the will of the citizens to submission. The public law is to be instead of conscience to every individual; it is therefore false that every violation of conscience in a citizen is a sin. The offices of the supreme governors are to be regulated by those ends which comprehend the security of the people.

Although Hobbes often admits false principles, and advances pernicious tenets, many just and profound observations are to be met with in his writings, which have probably led the way to the improvement of moral and political science.

But the philosophy of the human mind has never been more ably investigated, than by the celebrated British metaphysician, JOHN LOCKE,* who was born at Wrington, near Bristol, in the year 1632. He received the first part of his education at Westminster school, and became a student in Christ Church College, Oxford, 1651. The early produce of his genius promised a rich harvest; but his progress in knowledge was for a while retarded by defects which he discovered in

the established modes of education: his solid and penetrating judgment, little disposed to be satisfied with trifles, was disgusted with the unprofitable subtleties which occupied the schools.

In the year 1664, Locke, in order to improve his knowledge of human nature by an extensive acquaintance with mankind, accompanied the British ambassador to the court of Berlin. After remaining there a year, he returned to Oxford, and chiefly pursued the study of natural philosophy. Here he had the good fortune to form an intimacy with Lord Ashley, afterwards Earl of Shaftesbury; a man of superior genius, extensive reading, and elegant taste, from whose conversation Locke acknowledges himself to have derived great pleasure and advantage, and with whom he preserved an intimate friendship through life. He accompanied this nobleman, both as his medical adviser and philosophical friend; and was introduced by him to the acquaintance of many persons of the first distinction, to whom his good sense, extensive knowledge, and polished manners, rendered him highly acceptable. In 1668, he attended the Earl of Northumberland into France. On his return, he undertook to superintend the education of Lord Shaftesbury's only son. It was in the leisure which he commanded during this engagement, that he digested his ideas concerning the powers and operations of the human understanding; and, at the request of his friends, committed his thoughts upon this subject to writing.

That Locke possessed a noble and lofty mind, superior to prejudice, and capable, by its native energy, of exploring truth, even in regions of the intellectual world before unknown; that his judgment was accurate and profound; that his imagination was vigorous; and that he was well furnished with the ornaments of elegant learning, were there no other proofs, might be without hesitation concluded from his great work, "The Essay on the Human Understanding;" in which, discarding all systematic theories, he has, from actual experience and observation, delineated the features, and described the operations, of the human mind, with a degree of precision and minuteness, not to be found in Plato, Aristotle, or Des Cartes. After clearing the way by setting aside the whole doctrine of innate notions and principles, both speculative and practical, the author traces all ideas to two sources, sensation and reflection; treats at large of the nature of ideas, simple and complex; of the operation of the human understanding in forming, distinguishing, compounding, and associating them; of the manner in which words are applied as representations of ideas; of the difficulties and obstructions, in the search after truth, which arise from the imperfection of these signs; and of the nature, reality, kinds, degrees, casual hindrances, and necessary limits, of human knowledge.

While inquiry was thus striding rapidly in Bri-

* Vit. a Clerico, pref. Op.

tain, a number of eminent writers on the Continent were directing their investigations into the philosophy of things, or in criticising the dogmas of popular theology, of which one of the most eminent and learned was Peter Bayle. He was born at Carlat in Foix, in the year 1647. His father was a member of the Reformed Church, and instructed him in the Greek and Latin languages, and in other branches of learning, till he was nineteen years of age, when he entered upon his academic studies in the Jesuits' college at Toulouse. So insatiable was his thirst for knowledge, that by incessant application he impaired his constitution, and was twice in danger of losing his life; notwithstanding which, with the return of health, his love of study returned, and he read with great avidity authors both ancient and modern in every branch of learning. Among the ancients his principal favourite was Plutarch; among the moderns, Montaigne; and from these writers he probably derived his first bias towards scepticism. About the age of twenty he engaged in the study of logic, and afterwards expressed his regret that he had not sooner made himself master of this art. One of his college companions, a Romish priest, observing the unsettled state of his mind, prevailed upon him to submit his judgment to the authority of the church; and not without much surprise and regret on the part of his friends, he made a public profession of the Catholic faith. Not long afterwards, however, he was induced by the arguments and persuasions of his brother, a Protestant ecclesiastic, to recant his precipitate conversion, and return to the profession of the Reformed religion. As apostasy from the Catholic faith was at that time a capital offence in France, Bayle found it necessary to leave the kingdom, and in the year 1670, retired to Geneva. Here he studied the Cartesian philosophy, and saw reason to adopt it in preference to the barren subtleties of the Scholastic doctrine, which he had learned in the schools of the Jesuits; still, however, retaining that freedom of thought which led him, with Horace, to examine all sects, but adhere tenaciously to none.

Through the intercession of his friends, Bayle, in the year 1675, obtained permission to visit Paris, where the society of the most learned men, and the use of the best libraries, enabled him to prosecute his studies with great advantage. Through the interest of Basnage, who was his intimate friend, he obtained the philosophical chair in the University of Paris; and, within two years from that time, wrote a system of philosophy for the use of his pupils. In this situation he entered into a controversy with Poiret, on the subject of his treatise, entitled *Cogitationes rationales de Deo, Anima, et Malo*, "Rational Thoughts on God, the Soul, and Evil." Whilst Poiret continued a Cartesian, he treated his antagonist with temper; but when he became a Mystic, he inveighed against him with the utmost rancour. In

1680, Bayle engaged in a dispute with Valesius, a Jesuit, on the Cartesian notion of extension, in which he opposed, with great ingenuity, the doctrine of transubstantiation.

The severe persecution which at this time fell upon all Protestants in France, obliged Bayle, with many other learned men, to leave the country and settle in Holland. At the entreaty of one of his former pupils, he made choice of Rotterdam as his place of residence, where, with Jurieu, he founded a new school. He now published a treatise, which, in the year 1681, he had written, but could not obtain license to print at Paris, his "Thoughts on Comets;" a work replete with various learning, and well adapted to expose the folly of superstition. This was succeeded by a "Critical Dissertation on Maimburg's History of Calvinism;" in which the author employs the Cartesian weapons against the Romish church. Although the work was so well written, that the Prince of Conde confessed himself delighted with it, and even Maimburg acknowledged it to be an excellent book, it was ordered to be publicly burnt at Paris: nevertheless, it had many readers and admirers.

The reputation which Bayle had now acquired as a writer, encouraged him to undertake a literary journal, under the title of *Nouvelles de la Republique des Lettres*, "Intelligence from the Republic of Letters," in which he undertook to review the most important new publications. He did not content himself, in this work, with a barren detail of contents; but freely passed his judgment upon the merit of authors, and often illustrated the subject on which they treated by original observations. This work, which was begun in 1684, is justly esteemed one of the most valuable literary journals extant. It was afterwards continued by Basnage, under the title of *Histoire des Ouvrages des Savans*, "The History of the Works of the Learned." In a metaphysical dispute which arose in France, between Arnaud and Mallebranche, on Pleasure, Bayle defended Mallebranche. He wrote a treatise on Toleration, entitled "A Philosophical Commentary on the Words of Christ, 'Compel them to come in;'" in which he defended the cause of the Protestants with great eloquence; but with so much freedom as to offend the more orthodox of the Protestants themselves, and among the rest his friend and colleague Jurieu, with whom he had a long and severe contest. To console himself under the vexations which he experienced from this and other causes, Bayle undertook the design of writing "An Historical and Critical Dictionary;" a work which he lived to complete, and which remains as the chief monument of his learning, genius, and wit, and an indisputable proof of his propensity towards scepticism. The first two volumes of this work appeared in the year 1697; and, contrary to the author's usual manner, they were published with his name. This work contains innumerable

illustrations of the history of philosophy, both ancient and modern, and treats many difficult points with the hand of a bold and able critic. It was published in England by P. de la Roche, in 1709. Bayle's sceptical spirit further appears in a controversy which he held towards the close of his life with Le Clerc and others on the doctrine advanced by Cudworth, of "Plastic Nature," and "On the Origin of Evil," and "On the Manichean System." The principal works in which these controversies are carried on, are *Responsiones ad Provinciales quendam*, "Answers to a certain Provincial;" and *Entretiens de Maxime et Themiste*, "Dialogues of Maximus and Themistus." In the midst of these contests and labours, Bayle died, in the year 1706.

Among the Germans, who have attempted the general improvement of philosophy, some degree of praise is due to Christian Thomas, who, not without obloquy and hazard, threw off the sectarian yoke, and introduced eclectic freedom into the German schools.

CHRISTIAN THOMAS* was born at Leipsic, in 1655, and was well educated, first under his father, and afterwards in the Leipsic university. At first, he acquiesced in the established doctrines of the schools; but, upon reading Puffendorf's "Apology for rejecting the Scholastic Principles of Morals and Law," light suddenly burst upon his mind, and he determined to renounce all implicit deference to ancient dogmas. He read lectures upon the subject of Natural Law, first from the text of Grotius, and afterwards from that of Puffendorf, freely exercising his own judgment, and where he saw reason advancing new opinions. Whilst his father was living, paternal prudence and moderation restrained the natural vehemence and acrimony of the young man's temper, which was too apt to break out, even in his public lectures. But when he was left to himself, the boldness with which he advanced unpopular tenets, and the severity with which he dealt out his satirical censures, soon brought upon him the violent resentment of theologians and professors.

An "Introduction to Puffendorf," which Thomas published in the year 1687, wherein he deduced the obligation of morality from natural principles, occasioned great offence. The following year he became still more unpopular, by opening a monthly literary journal, which he entitled, "Free Thoughts; or, Monthly Dialogues on various Books, chiefly new," in which he attacked many of his contemporaries with great severity. The raillery of this satirical work was too provoking to be endured: complaints were lodged before the Ecclesiastical Court of Dresden; the bookseller was called upon to give up the author; and it was only through the interest of the Mares-

chal that Thomas escaped punishment. The title of the work was now changed; but its spirit remained. A humorous and satirical Life of Aristotle, and several other sarcastic papers, kept alive the flame of resentment; till at length it again burst forth, on a charge brought against him before the same court by the clergy of Leipsic for contempt of religion; but he defended himself with such ability, that none of his adversaries chose to reply, and the matter was dropped.

A satirical review, which he wrote, of a treatise "On the Divine Right of Kings," published by a Danish divine; "A Defence of the Sect of the Pietists," and other eccentric and satirical publications, at last inflamed the resentment of the clergy against Thomas to such a degree, that he was threatened with imprisonment. To escape the storm which thickened about him, he entreated permission from the Elector of Brandenburg, in whose court he had several friends, that he might read private lectures in the city of Hall. This indulgence being obtained, Thomas became a voluntary exile from Leipsic. After a short interval, he was appointed public professor of Jurisprudence, first in Berlin and afterwards at Hall. In these situations, he found himself at liberty to indulge his satirical humour, and to engage in the controversies of the times: and, as long as he lived, he continued to make use of this liberty in a manner which subjected him to much odium. At the same time, he persevered in his endeavours to correct and subdue the prejudices of mankind, and to improve the state of philosophy. He died at Hall in the year 1728.

Besides the satirical journal already mentioned, Thomas wrote several treatises on Logic, Morals, and Jurisprudence; in which he advanced many dogmas contrary to received opinions. In his writings on physics, he leaves the ground of experiment and rational investigation, and appears among the Mystics. His later pieces are in many particulars inconsistent with the former. His principal philosophical works are "An Introduction to Aulic Philosophy, or Outlines of the Art of Thinking and Reasoning;"* "Introduction to Rational Philosophy;"† "A Logical Praxis;"‡ "Introduction to Moral Philosophy;"§ "A Cure for Irregular Passions, and the Doctrine of Self-Knowledge;"§ "The new Art of discovering the secret Thoughts of Men;" "Divine Jurisprudence;" "Foundations of the Law of Nature and Nations;" "Dissertation on the Crime of Magic;" "Essay on the Nature and Essence of Spirit, or Principles of Natural and Moral Science;"|| "History of Wisdom and Folly."

We shall subjoin a brief specimen of the more peculiar tenets of this bold, eccentric, and inconsistent philosopher:—

Thought arises from images impressed upon the

* Leporin. Germ. Lit. p. ii. Program. Jurisp. Div. Procem. Caussæ Jurid. p. iii. n. l. 7. et pref. Libr. ejus.

* Lips. 1688. † Hall. 1691. ‡ 1692.

§ 1696. || 1699.

brain; and the action of thinking is performed in the whole brain. Brutes are destitute of sensation. Man is a corporeal substance, capable of thinking and moving, or endued with intellect and will. Man does not always think. Truth is the agreement of thought with the nature of things. The senses are not deceitful, but all fallacy is the effect of precipitation and prejudice. From perceptions arise ideas, and their relations; and from these, reasonings. It is impossible to discover truth by the syllogistic art. No other rule is necessary in reasoning, than that of following the natural order of investigation; beginning from those things which are best known, and proceeding, by easy steps, to those which are more difficult.

No philosopher has been more generally or justly celebrated in Germany, than CHRISTIAN WOLFE,* born at Breslau, in the year 1679.

After having been well instructed in the rudiments of learning and science in his own country, Wolfe prosecuted his studies successively in the universities of Jena, Hamburg, and Leipsic. At the age of twenty-six, he had acquired so much distinction in the schools, that he was appointed professor of mathematics, and soon afterwards of philosophy in general, in the university of Hall; and science received considerable improvements from his researches.

Wolfe was now rising towards the summit of philosophical reputation, when the opinion which he entertained on the doctrine of necessity being deemed by his colleagues inimical to religion; and an oration, which he delivered in praise of the morality of the Chinese having given much offence; an accusation of heresy was publicly brought against him in the university of Hall, and afterwards transferred to the courts of Berlin: and, though he attempted to justify himself in a treatise which he wrote on the subject of fatality, a royal mandate was issued, in November 1723, requiring him to leave the Prussian dominions. Having been formerly invited by the Landgrave of Hesse Cassel, to fill a professorial chair in the university of Cassel, Wolfe now put himself under the patronage of that prince, who had the liberality to afford him a secure asylum, and appointed him professor of mathematics and philosophy.

The question concerning the grounds of the censure which had been passed upon Wolfe was now every where freely canvassed: almost every German university was inflamed with disputes on the subject of liberty and necessity; and the names of Wolfians and Anti-Wolfians were every where heard. After an interval of nine years, the current of public opinion turned in favour of Wolfe, and the King of Prussia reversed his sentence of exile, and appointed him vice-chancellor of the university of Hall, where his return was

welcomed with every expression of triumph. From this time he was employed in completing his Institutes of Philosophy, which he lived to accomplish in every branch except policy. In 1745, he was created a baron by the Elector of Bavaria, and succeeded Ludowig in the office of chancellor of the university. He continued to enjoy these honours till the year 1754, when he expired.

Wolfe possessed a clear and methodical understanding, which by long exercise in mathematical investigations was particularly fitted for the employment of digesting the several branches of knowledge into regular systems; and his fertile powers of invention enabled him to enrich almost every field of science, in which he laboured, with some valuable additions. The lucid order which appears in all his writings enables his reader to follow his conceptions with ease and certainty, through the longest trains of reasoning; but the close connection of the several parts of his works, together with the vast variety and extent of the subjects on which he treats, renders it impracticable to give a summary of his doctrines.*

Among the modern innovators in philosophy, we must not omit the well-known name of Spinoza, a most original and independent thinker.

BENEDICT DE SPINOZA,† was born at Amsterdam in 1632, was a Jew by descent and education; but very early discovered such dissatisfaction with the religion of his fathers, and advanced opinions so contrary to their established tenets, that a sentence of *anathema* was pronounced upon him by his brethren. Excommunicated from the synagogue, certain Christians, who were personally attached to him, granted him an asylum, and afforded him an opportunity of acquiring the knowledge of the Latin and Greek languages, and studying the Cartesian philosophy. The vehemence with which he continued to attack the religion of his countrymen alarmed and terrified them; and they attempted, first to bribe him to silence, by offering him an annual pension of a thousand florins, and afterwards to take him off by assassination. Both these measures proving ineffectual, they accused him, before the magistrate, of apostasy and blasphemy; and he was banished from the city.

In his exile, Spinoza studied mathematics and natural philosophy, and supported himself by the mechanical art of polishing optical glasses. His chief residence was at Rhenburg, where he was often visited by followers of Des Cartes, who came to consult him on difficult questions. At their request, he published, in 1664, "The principles of the Cartesian philosophy demonstrated geometri-

* Pinacotheca Script. illust. Dec. i. ii. 10. Gutschedii Elog. Wolf. 1755. Hal. 4to. Ludovici Hist. Phil. Wolf. Langii Synops. Script.

* Vidend. Wolf. Declar. de Scriptis prop. Rothfischer. Victoria Veritatis Nov. Lit. Lips. 1723. Formey Eloges des Académ. de Berlin, t. ii. Elogium Historicum de Wolf. Hal. 1755.

† Coler. Vit. Spinoz. Bayle. Nicéron. t. xiii. p. 94. Basnage, Hist. des Juifs, p. ix. c. 37.

trically," with an appendix, in which he advanced metaphysical opinions wholly inconsistent with the doctrine of Des Cartes. To escape the odium which this publication drew upon him, he retired to a village not far from the Hague; thither he was followed by many persons, both countrymen and foreigners, who were inclined to espouse his doctrines.

He was even invited by the Elector Palatine to fill the chair of philosophy at Heidelberg; but from an apprehension that his liberty would, in that situation, be abridged, he declined the proposal. He lived in retirement, with great sobriety and decency of manners, till a consumption brought him to an early end, in 1677.

Spinoza, in his lifetime, published, besides the work already mentioned, *Tractatum theologico-politicum*, "A Treatise theological and political." His "Posthumous Works" contain five treatises. 1. Ethics demonstrated geometrically. 2. Politics. 3. On the improvement of the Understanding. 4. Epistles and Answers. 5. A Hebrew Grammar. The impieties contained in these treatises excited general indignation; and refutations were sent forth from various quarters, by writers of all religious persuasions; in which the empty sophisms, the equivocal definitions, the false reasonings, and all the absurdities of the writings of Spinoza, are fully exposed. The sum of his doctrine is this:—

The essence of substance is, to exist. There is in nature only one substance, with two modifications, thought and extension. This substance is infinitely diversified, having within its own essence the necessary causes of the changes through which it passes. No substance can be supposed to produce or create another; therefore, besides the substance of the universe there can be no other; but all things are comprehended in it, and are modes of this substance, either thinking or extended.

This one universal substance, Spinoza calls God, and ascribes to it Divine attributes. He expressly asserts, that God is the immanent, not the transitive, cause of all things. His doctrine is, therefore, not to be confounded with that of those ancient philosophers, who held God to be "The Universal Whole;" for, according to them, the visible and intellectual worlds are produced by *emanation* from the eternal fountain of divinity, that is, by an expanding, or unfolding, of the Divine nature, which was the effect of intelligence and design; whereas, in the system of Spinoza, all things are *immanent*, and necessary modifications of one universal substance, which, to conceal his Atheism, he calls God. Nor can Spinozism be with any propriety derived, as some have imagined, from the Cartesian philosophy; for, in that system, two distinct substances are proposed; and the existence of Deity is a fundamental principle.

We now come to the age immediately preced-

ing the French Revolution—an age of eventful struggle between old and new opinions, and one that requires our most careful attention and elucidation.

The remarkable progress of liberal opinions in France prior to the revolution, may be dated from the time that CONDILLAC published his philosophical opinions to the world. He was born at Grenoble in 1715, and lived, like his brother the Abbe Mably, from his youth devoted to study. His *Essai sur l'Origine des Connaissances Humaines* (1746, 2 vols.) first drew the attention of the world to a thinker, who, with great acuteness of mind, sought to explain, by the law of the association of ideas, almost all the phenomena of the human mind. He afterwards developed his opinions more clearly in his *Traites des Systemes*, in which he frequently referred to more accurate observations. The tracing back of the thoughts to their most simple beginnings, as the most certain means of finding the truth, is urgently enjoined by him. He held that all mental and moral manifestations are only modes or states of sensation, and thus gave a simplicity to the operations of the human mind, which made him easily understood, and highly popular. The clearness of Condillac's style added to this simplicity of theory, conducted the reader with ease through the darkest labyrinths of metaphysical inquiry; hence the great progress and popularity of his philosophy in France. He differs from Locke in tracing all ideas to simple sensation, leaving out of consideration reflection as a source of ideas. To the influence of the philosophy of Condillac we are indebted for the labours of the *Encyclopædists*, in the cause of Free Inquiry, to whom we now call the attention of the reader, as the immediate precursor of that mighty whirlwind of opinion, which shook European society to its foundations, and levelled to the earth the institutions and thoughts of a thousands years.

The author who pushed Condillac's theory of the origin of knowledge to the greatest extent was HELVETIUS. According to him all our ideas are derived from the external senses, the cause of the inferiority of the lower animals to man, must be sought in the difference of bodily organization. In support of this position he reasons as follows:

"1st. The feet of all quadrupeds terminate either in horns, as those of the ox or the deer: or in nails, as those of the dog or the wolf; or in claws, as those of the lion and the cat. This peculiar organization of the feet of these animals deprives them not only of the sense of touch, considered as a channel of information with respect to external objects, but also of the dexterity requisite for the practice of the mechanical arts.

2d. "The life of animals in general being of shorter duration than that of man, does not permit them to make so many observations, or to acquire so many ideas.

3d. "Animals being better armed, and better

clothed by nature than the human species, have fewer wants, and consequently fewer motives to stimulate, or to exercise their invention. If the voracious animals are more cunning than others, it is because hunger, ever inventive, inspires them with the art of stratagem to surprise their prey.

4th. "The lower animals compose a society that flies from man, who, by the assistance of weapons made by himself, is become formidable to the strongest among them.

5th. "Man is the most prolific and versatile animal upon earth. He is born and lives in every climate; while many of the other animals, as the lion, the elephant, and the rhinoceros are found only in a certain latitude. And the more any species of animals capable of making observations is multiplied, the more ideas, and the greater ingenuity is it likely to possess.

"But some may ask," continues Helvetius, "why monkeys, whose paws are nearly as dexterous as our hands, do not make a progress equal to that of man? A variety of causes (he observes) conspire to fix them in that state of inferiority in which we find them:—1. Men are more multiplied on the earth. 2. Among the different species of monkeys, there are few whose strength can be compared to that of man; and accordingly they form only a fugitive society before the human race. 3. Monkeys being ^{practised} ~~beasts~~ have fewer wants, and therefore less invention than man. 4. Their life is shorter. And, finally, the original structure of their bodies keeping them like children in perpetual motion, even after their desires are satisfied, they are not susceptible of lassitude (*ennui*), which ought to be considered (as I shall prove afterwards) as one of the principles to which the human mind owes its improvements.

"By combining (he adds) all these differences between the nature of man and of beast, we may understand why sensibility and memory, though faculties common to man and to the lower animals, are in the latter only sterile qualities."*

It is surprising that in the above enumeration, Helvetius takes no notice of the want of language among the lower animals, and of the difference between them and man in the cerebral region. The omission of these important distinctions renders the reasonings of Helvetius exceedingly inconclusive and unsatisfactory on the points he endeavours to establish. Helvetius suffered much obloquy and persecution for his opinions respecting man, especially from the clergy, who were his most bitter opponents, as they have been of all men in the least degree liberal in opinion.

The principal contributors, besides Helvetius, to the great French Encyclopædia, which contributed so much to change the opinions of France, were D'Alembert, Diderot, and Condorcet, writers who carried out to the full extent the simple material theory of Condillac.

D'ALEMBERT's first intellectual pursuit was mathematics, in which he made very great progress. He continued his mathematical labours for several years, publishing at various intervals important treatises on the most difficult questions in mathematics, astronomy, &c. In the first fervour of his fondness for mathematics, he had, for a time, become indifferent for *belles lettres*; but his love of them soon revived, after his most important discoveries, when a mathematical investigation no longer afforded him so rich a harvest of new truths, or he felt the necessity of relaxation. He entered in this open career with his introduction to the *Encyclopædia*, a treatise which will always be a pattern of style in treating of scientific subjects, uniting as it does—elegance and precision. D'A. comprised in his introduction, the essence of all his knowledge in mathematics, philosophy, and literature, acquired in a study of 20 years; and this was all that was known at this time in France. His name being prefixed to the *Encyclopædia*, he shared its persecutions and abuse by the priesthood. Though persecuted on account of his opinions, and treated with neglect by the government of his country, he would not accept of the invitation of Frederick II. to settle in Berlin, nor the offers of the Russian Empress who desired him to take charge of the education of her son with a pension of 100,000 livres. His country learned his worth from foreigners; and the King of Prussia gave him a pension, when the Academy of Sciences in Paris refused him his salary to which he was justly entitled. Though his income was always moderate, his beneficence was great. He lived above thirty years in the plainest manner in the house of the woman who had brought him up, and left those lodgings only when his health compelled him. Valuing independence more than anything else, he avoided the society of the great, and sought only that which he could enter with frankness and cheerfulness. The reputation which he enjoyed, and the intimate friendship between him and Voltaire, and his great merits, produced him many enemies. He died of the stone, being unwilling to submit to any operation, in 1783, in the 66th year of his age.

His religious character was that of a sober deist. He was a strenuous advocate of Condillac's theory of the origin of ideas, and a powerful advocate of the doctrine of Philosophical necessity.

His coadjutor, Diderot, agreed with D'Alembert in the leading features of his philosophy, but being of a more active temperament, he pushed his anti-religious principles to a much greater extreme. Diderot was the sworn enemy of all kinds of superstition; and from various accounts it appears that he contributed much to make Atheism fashionable, by the eloquence of his writings, and still more so, by the extraordinary powers of his conversation.

* Treaties on the Mind.

FREE-THINKERS' INFORMATION FOR THE PEOPLE.

CONDORCET was another celebrated contributor to the *Encyclopædia*, and an opponent of superstition. Being intimately acquainted with Lavoisier, he was led into a thorough examination of the economists, and his acquaintance with D'Alembert, made him take an active part in the *Encyclopædia*, for which he wrote many articles. He was the personal friend of most of the contributors to this great work. In all his writings he displays an exalted view of human nature. This feeling determined him in favour of the cause of the Americans, during their contest with Britain. He was also a friend of the enslaved negroes, and anxious for their freedom. Under a cold exterior, he possessed the most ardent passions. D'Alembert compared him to a volcano covered with snow.

While the Encyclopædists were thus attacking superstition in its various departments, a bold assault was made on the whole citadel by Baron D'Holback, in his *Système de la Nature*, by far the boldest publication of those times. It first appeared in 1770, and bore on the title page the name of Mirabaud, a respectable but not very eminent writer, who, after long filling the office of perpetual secretary to the French Academy, died at a very advanced age in 1760. It has since been ascertained that D'Holback was the writer. The *Système de la Nature* is a work of very great ability, but rather diffuse and wordy for a strictly logical and philosophical treatise. It is remarkable for the eloquence of its composition, and is better known in this country than any French philosophical treatise of that time, having been often published in English. Its influence has been very remarkable in liberalizing the general mind, perhaps more so than any other work of a purely philosophical character. Atheism, the non-immortality and immateriality of the soul, and the doctrine of philosophical necessity, are the leading principles inculcated and defended in this celebrated work.

But by far the most influential writer of this school in France, was VOLTAIRE, who, perhaps, accomplished more for Free Inquiry than any man that ever lived. Bound down to no particular class of philosophical opinions, he boldly criticised all; and by the grace, wit, and vivacity of his style, he threw a charm around the driest and most abstract question, which made readers and admirers of every body. It is not in profundity of research, closeness of reasoning, or justness of conclusion that the great merits of Voltaire as a teacher and awakener of mankind are to be found, but in the elegance and liveliness with which he invested all subjects; and the overwhelming force of his wit and ridicule, by which the defects and errors of systems were laid bare, and their supporters prostrated and confounded. As well observed by Byron, when speaking of this giant of French literature, he was

"A wit as various,—gay, grave, sage, or wild—
Historian, bard, philosopher combined;
He multiplied himself among mankind,
The Proteus of their talents: but his own
Breathed most in ridicule,—which, as the wind
Blew where it listed, laying all things prone,
Now to o'erthrow a fool, and now to shake a throne."

Books without readers might as well be unwritten; to the extent which they are read and studied do they influence the human mind. And to be read, they require skilful writing—hence important truths have often passed unheeded and unrecognised, when obscurely and uncouthly represented. But in the case of Voltaire, every thing assumed the most attractive guise. Upon whatever subject his mind was employed, (and there is scarcely a department of knowledge upon which he has not written,) he was always sure of an audience. No obscurity, no stiffness, or dull and circuitous reasoning characterised his pen; but every thing is as clear as the sunbeam, and as bright and laughing wit. He discusses the most grave topics in philosophy with a liveliness of diction and illustration rarely to be found in the pages of the most light and vivacious essayist; while his sense of the ridiculous and absurd, enables him to place the weak position of his opponents in the most laughter-exciting point of view. In his attack on superstition, he is unmerciful; yet even in making his most deadly thrusts, there is a blandness in his manner, and a courtesy in his mode of warfare, which, while it disarms the ferocity of bigotry, only the more certainly defeats and destroys his antagonists. It was therefore the highly popular style of Voltaire, and the charm he could throw around all subjects, which rendered his influence so immense in France; and which, by making infidelity or unbelief in Christianity fashionable, completely undermined the blood-cemented edifice of superstition. To the influence of the writings of Voltaire may be added that of the writings of Rousseau, who, though his opinions on religion were rather restricted, yet by his political and moral writings, did much to make the people dissatisfied with superstition and priestcraft, and with political and social tyranny—their collateral evils. I need scarcely add, that these great men were all persecuted by the clergy.

While the current of liberal opinions was thus rapidly flowing in France, the moralists and metaphysicians of Great Britain were not idle.

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"LET ALL HAVE FULL LIBERTY TO TEACH AND MAINTAIN WHATEVER OPINIONS THEY
MAY CHOOSE."—*Melancthon.*

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THE STRUGGLES OF PHILOSOPHY WITH SUPERSTITION AND PRIESTCRAFT;
ILLUSTRATED IN THE HISTORY OF FREE INQUIRY.*

ARTICLE VII.—PROGRESS OF PHILOSOPHICAL SPECULATIONS, AND FREE-THINKING IN MORALS AND RELIGION.

Hobbes, of whom we have already spoken, was followed by Anthony Collins, a magistrate of London, who with great ability illustrated and defended the doctrine of Necessity, in opposition to Dr Samuel Clarke and the Freewill advocates. In a work, entitled a *Philosophical Inquiry concerning Human Liberty*, he prosecutes the argument; and in which he endeavours to prove that man is a necessary agent—1. From our experience; 2. From the impossibility of liberty; 3. From the consideration of the Divine prescience; 4. From the nature of rewards and punishments; and 5. From the nature of morality.

Cotemporary with Collins and Clarke, there arose David Hume, one of the most profound and original thinkers that ever lived. Few men whose opinions have been so much criticised and condemned, have more perfectly escaped any personal computation. His character was so simple that he did not even affect modesty; but neither his friendship nor his deportment were charged by a fame which filled all Europe. His whole character is beautifully represented in the story of La Roche, by Mackenzie. In his twenty seventh year he published in London the *Treatise of Human Nature*, and sometime afterwards his *Inquiry concerning the principles of Morals*. His general doctrine contained in those works is, that an interest in the well-being of others, implanted by nature, which he calls *sympathy* in his *Treatise on Human Nature*, and *benevolence* in his subsequent inquiry, prompts us to be pleased with all generally beneficial actions. The great objects of the *Treatise of Human Nature* will be best explained in Mr Hume's own words—"Tis

evident (he says) that all the sciences have a relation, greater or lesser, to human nature; and that however wide any of them may seem to run from it, they still return back to it by one passage or another. Even Mathematics, Natural Philosophy, and Natural Religion, are in some measure dependant on the science of man, since they lie under the cognizance of men, and are judged of by their powers and faculties.

"If, therefore, the sciences of mathematics, natural philosophy, and natural religion, are in some measure dependant on the knowledge of man, what may be expected in the other sciences, whose connection with human nature is more close and intimate? The sole end of logic is to explain the principles and operations of our reasoning faculty, and the nature of our ideas. Morals and criticism regard our tastes and sentiments, and politics consider men as united in society, and dependant on each other.

"Here, then, is the only expedient from which we can hope for success in our philosophical researches, to leave the tedious lingering method which we have hitherto followed, and, instead of taking now and then a castle or village on the frontier, to march up directly to the capital or centre of these sciences—to human nature itself, which, being once master of, we may everywhere else hope for an easy victory. From this station we may extend our conquests over all those sciences which more intimately concern human life, and may afterwards proceed at leisure to discover more fully those which are the objects of pure curiosity. There is no question of importance whose decision is not comprised in the

* The proper title, from a mistake of the printer, was not inserted in last number. It should have been, "THE STRUGGLES OF PHILOSOPHY WITH SUPERSTITION AND PRIESTCRAFT, ILLUSTRATED IN THE HISTORY OF FREE-INQUIRY—Article VI." and then the title, as it was given; instead of which, the former was left out and the latter inserted only, thus cutting off the connection which, according to the text, existed betwixt that number and those preceding it. There was also an eratum in the extract from Helvetius, p. 103, line 29. It is stated "Monkey's being foreigners, &c." which should be, "Monkey's being frugivorous, &c."

Science of Man; and there is none which can be decided, with any certainty, before he becomes acquainted with that science. In pretending, therefore, to explain the principles of human nature, we in effect, propose a complete system of the sciences built on a foundation almost new, and the only one on which they can stand with any security.

"And as the science of man is the only solid foundation for the other sciences, the only solid foundation we can give to this science itself must be laid on experience and observation. 'Tis no astonishing reflection to consideration that the application of experimental philosophy to moral subjects should come after that to natural, at the distance of about a whole century; since we find, in fact, that there was about the same interval between the origin of these two sciences; and that, reckoning from Thales to Socrates, the space of time is nearly equal to that betwixt my Lord Bacon and some late philosophers in England,* who have begun to put the science of man on a new footing, and have engaged the attention and excited the curiosity of the public."

In carrying out the objects stated in the foregoing extract, Mr Hume divides our knowledge into two classes, *impressions* and *ideas*—the former comprehending our *sensations*, properly so called, and also our *perceptions* of sensible qualities—the latter the objects of our thoughts when we *remember* or *imagine*, or in general, exercise any of our intellectual powers on things past, absent, or future. These ideas he considers as copies of our impressions, and the words which denote them as the only *signs* entitled to the attention of a philosopher—every word professing to denote an idea, of which the corresponding cannot be pointed out, being *ipso facto*, unmeaning and illusory.

The obvious result of these principles is, that what are called impressions by Mr Hume, furnish either immediately or remotely, the *whole materiel*, about which our thoughts can be employed—a conclusion coinciding exactly with the account of the origin of our ideas borrowed by Gassendi from the ancient Epicureans, and entertained also by the *French Encyclopædists*.

With this fundamental principle of the Gossendists, Mr Hume combined the logical method recommended by their great antagonists, the Cartesians, and a strong leaning to the *idealism* of Malebranche and of Bishop Berkeley. Like Descartes, he began with doubting every thing but he was too quick sighted to be satisfied like Descartes with the solutions given by that philosopher of his doubts. This is neither a scheme of *Materialism*, or of *Spiritualism*, for his reasonings strike equally at the root of both. His aim was to establish a general scepticism, and for this purpose

he availed himself of the data assumed by the most opposite sects, shifting his ground skilfully from one position to another, as best suits the scope of his present argument. The *Theory of Necessary Causation* is a development of his general view on the nature of human knowledge. In speaking of *causes*, he observes, that "all certainty arises from the comparisons of ideas and from the discovery of such relations as are unalterable, so long as the ideas continue the same. These relations are *resemblance, proportions in quantity and number, degrees of any quality*, and *contrariety*, none of which are implied in this proposition, *whatever has a beginning, has also a cause of existence*. That proposition therefore, is not intuitively certain. At least every one who would assert it to be intuitively certain, must deny these to be the only infallible relations, and must find some other relation of that kind to be implied in it, which will be then time enough to examine."† In another place of the same Treatise he says, "we derive the opinion of the necessity of a cause neither from demonstration or intuition," but that, "this opinion must necessarily arise from observation and experience or as he elsewhere expresses himself, "all our reasoning concerning causes and effects are derived from nothing but custom, and consequently, belief is more properly an act of the *sensitive* than of the *cognitive* part of our Natures."‡

Mr Hume's definition of cause and effect were in agreement with the general sceptical spirit of his philosophy. Rejecting these terms in the sense in which they had been previously employed, both by the vulgar and by philosophers, he states in his Essays, that "one event follows another; but we never observe any tie between them. They seem *conjoined*, but never *connected*. And as we have no idea of any thing which never appeared to our outward sense or inward sentiment, the necessary conclusion seems to be, that we have no idea of connection or power at all; and that the words are absolutely without any meaning when employed in philosophical reasonings or in common life."

Besides checking the dogmatism of metaphysicians and system makers, by thus exhibiting the uncertainty of human knowledge, he did good service, in exposing the character and influence of superstition, and more in so ably and successfully proving the impossibility and absurdity of miracles. Those who wish to see the most abstruse subjects treated with logical accuracy and clearness, and the arrogant pretensions of religious system makers and miracle mongers successfully exposed, would do well to study the essays of this great master of dialectics, presenting, as they do, the most masterly and elegant specimens of philosophical writing in the English language.

* Mr Locke, Lord Shaftsbury, Dr Mandeville, Mr Hutcheson, Dr Blair, &c.

* Treatise on Human Nature.

† Treatise on Human Nature.

The philosophical writings of Hume called forth a host of replies from various parties, who, fearful that the people might be disposed to believe *too little* for the interests of the church, rushed with eager haste into the wordy conflict, of which combatants the most important were Dr Reid, Bishop Butler, and Lord Kaimes. Even to the present day, the reasonings of Mr Hume have furnished material for nearly all writers who have essayed their powers upon the discussion of metaphysical and moral phenomena.

David Hartley, the celebrated author of the theory of vibrations, was cotemporary with Hume, having been born in 1705, and died in 1757. Overlooking mere metaphysical explanations of the origin of thoughts, he endeavoured to explain ideas upon physiological grounds. At that period chemical phenomena were referred to mechanical principles; vegetable and animal life were subjected to mechanical and chemical laws, and, while some physiologists* ascribed the vital functions to the understanding, the greater part of metaphysicians were disposed to derive the intellectual operations from bodily causes. Hartley and Bonnet† agreed in referring all the intellectual operations to the *association of ideas*, and in representing that association as reducible to the single law—that ideas which enter the mind at the same time, acquire a tendency to call up each other, which is in direct proportion to the frequency of their having entered together. Both writers speak of vibrations in the brain, and nerves exciting ideas, and both of them have recourse to a subtle and elastic ether co-operating with the nerves in carrying on the communication between soul and body. This fluid Bonnet conceived to be in the nerves, in a manner analogous to that in which the electric fluid is contained in the solid bodies which conduct it—differing in this respect from the Cartesians, as well as from the ancient physiologists, who considered the nerves as hollow tubes or pipes, within which the animal spirits were included. It is to this elastic ether that Bonnet ascribes the vibrations of which he supposes the nerves to be susceptible. Hartley's theory differs in one respect from this, as he speaks of vibrations and vibratiuncles in the medullary substance of the brain and nerves. He agreed, however, with Bonnet, in thinking that to those vibrations in the nerves the co-operation of the ether is essentially necessary, and therefore at bottom the two hypothesis may be regarded as the same. Nor was it in their physiological theories concerning the nature of the union between soul and body that these two philosophers agreed. Both held the doctrine of necessity in its fullest extent, and both set at defiance the stereotyped creeds and dogmas of all established churches. The opinions

taught by Hartley were afterwards embraced and defended by the celebrated Dr Priestly, who held the mind to be dependant on physiological conditions of the nervous system, and who supported with great ability the doctrine of philosophical necessity.

The author of the *Light of Nature Pursued*, ABRAHAM TUCKER,* admitted the Hartleian theory with some slight modifications. In that part of his work which relates to the intellect, he adopted much from Hartley, substituting for the Hartleian term *Association* that of *Translation*, while he carries out the same theory of the principles which move the mind to action. His works, however, supplanted by a more advanced philosophy, have fallen into oblivion during the past century.

We now approach the philosophical speculators of the present age, among which pre-eminently stands JEREMY BENTHAM, the great moral and political reformer. His first publication was *A Fragment on Government*, employed in the examination of a short paragraph in Blackstone. Two years after he published an excellent tract on *The Hard Labour Bill*, which, concurring with the spirit exerted by Howard's inquiries laid the foundations of just reasoning on reformatory punishment. The *Letters on Usury* are a first-rate specimen of the exhaustive discussion of a moral and political question, leaving no objection, however feeble answered, and no difficulty, however small, unexplained. The Introduction to the *Principles of Morals and Politics*, printed before the Letters, but published after them, was the first sketch of his system, and is still the only account of it by himself.

The principle of Utility, though previously advocated in other terms by Hume and Paley, was preached by Bentham with the zeal of a discoverer. It is the leading feature throughout his writings. All morality is deduced by him from the tendency of human actions. He has no notion of abstract virtue and vice, but holds that to be virtuous which tends to the general good of the people, and that to be vicious whose tendency is otherwise. Thus virtue and vice, good and evil, proves themselves in their results; or, in other words, they are recognised and classified alone by the standard of utility—the measure of our experience.

The philosophy of Bentham has been well illustrated by Mr Mill, in his *Analysis of the Human Mind*, and on the continent by M. Dumont, who, by translating the works of the great jurist, and clothing them in popular phraseology, has done much to make them popular abroad. It may be remarked that the principles of Bentham are influencing to a very great extent the moral and political opinions of the day, and must ere long effect important changes in government and

* G. E. Stahl, a German chemist and physician of great eminence.

† Born in 1720, died in 1793.

* Born in 1705—died in 1774.

jurisprudence. Mr Bentham, as well as his disciple Mr Mill, are advocates of the doctrine of Necessity, and of man being the creature of circumstances. Bentham's school coincides with the ancient Epicureans, in rendering interest or the desire of happiness the great incentive to action.

Leaving apart for a time the abstract speculations of metaphysical and moral writers of the past and present centuries, let us briefly glance at the proceedings of the less theoretical and inventive minds which arose during the same period; who, instead of building up systems of philosophy, applied the active powers of the mind to demolish by popular argument the strongholds of superstition and priestcraft. We have already, in speaking of the philosophy of France prior to the revolution, exhibited the great importance of Voltaire in this respect; a writer who, almost single-handed, banished superstition out of France by means of his galling ridicule, and sarcasm, supported by his highly informed and cultivated mind. His *Philosophical Dictionary*, his masterly defence of *Religious Toleration*, arising from the persecution of the *Calas* family, and his philosophical tales, novels, and essays, in which these important questions are discussed in the most engaging and popular manner, all combined to make his influence almost irresistible in France. A power, acknowledged from the persecutions to which he was subjected by the church; for persecution is only the sign of weakness in the persecuting party and of strength in him who is persecuted. The anti-theological writings of D'Holbach, Condorcet, Diderot, and D'Alembert, have also been glanced at, and, with the exception of Volney, the author of that beautiful work the *Ruins of Empires*, M. Dupuis on *Astronomical Theology*, and the author of *Bons Sense*, the *Cure Meslier*, who, from being a priest, turned a most uncompromising anti-superstitionist, we have no French writer in this department of any great importance to require our notice.

In Britain, up to the end of the last century, all reasonings which involved conclusions in opposition to popular theology were generally of an abstract and refined character, addressed to the minds of the educated and wealthy, such as were the writings of Hobbes, Bolingbroke, Shaftesbury, Hume, and Tindal. The mass of the people were kept in brutal ignorance, and nurtured in all the errors and mischievous absurdities of fanaticism; and infidelity so called was only fashionable among the great, and then only as an agreeable speculation unconnected with views of a better state of society or of a purer system of morals. But the time had come when the public mind was no longer thus to be priest-bound and enslaved, when anti-Catholic riots, and church and king mobs, such as disgraced the streets of London and Birmingham, were gradually to give way to a better and more enlightened condition of the popular mind. And he who was to lead the way in this great moral re-

volution—who abandoning all conventional respect for error whether in politics or religion, boldly preached, not to select coteries of the initiated, but to the million masses of mankind, in language they could understand, and in arguments they could appreciate, the universal rights of mankind, and the slavish and brutalizing character of religious creeds,—now made his appearance.

It has been often said, and truly, that great men are the creatures of great events; the French revolution is a pregnant illustration of this principle, as to that convulsion we owe Mirabeau, Napoleon, and all the other civil and military leaders, which Phoenix-like arose from the ashes of that mighty volcano; and so was it in the case of **THOMAS PAINE**. Born the son of a poor Quaker; brought up to a humble profession, and subsequently an exciseman; he might have passed through life comparatively unknown, had it not been for the circumstances of the age in which he lived. It was an age of political misrule and religious fanaticism in which the latter furnished the former with excuses for every recklessness and abuse. The colonies had grown tired of the yoke imposed on them by Great Britain, and in a moment of enthusiasm when among other importations of oppression from the mother country the indirect tax-gatherer was about to place his foot upon the shores of Columbia, they arose and declared their national independence. The spectacle of a young and vigorous people thus absolving the yoke of allegiance to a foreign power, and declaring the equality of the human race, was an event in the history of mankind, which has few parallels, and to this circumstance do we owe Thomas Paine as a great political and anti-theological writer. This great exciting cause called forth the gigantic powers of his mind, and the publication of his *Common Sense* and *Crisis*, besides accomplishing the greatest good in the cause for which they were written, showed his deep devotion to the cause of human liberty, and the vigorous powers of his intellect in no ordinary degree.

Upon the American succeeded the French Revolution, and here again occurred another field for the exercise of his controversial powers. In the fury of the moment, arising from the sense of the accumulated evils of ages flowing from a feudal aristocracy, a corrupt court, and a bigoted and persecuting Church, the masses of French in the phrenzy of popular excitement, swept away every vestige of the causes to which they attributed their manifold wrongs. At this juncture, when the aristocracy of Europe took alarm at the danger which threatened their exclusive order, a pensioner and a political turn-coat was engaged to come to the rescue of the fallen edifice of royalty and wealth; and to publish a defence of the regime, under which France had groaned previous to the Revolution. Paine had heard of the intention of Burke some time before the publication of the

book which was to annihilate Republicanism and Jacobinism, and he promised the friends of liberty a reply. Burke's hireling treatise made its appearance, and not long after came a reply in the shape of the celebrated *Rights of Man*, in which not only were the positions of Burke completely swept away, and the right of the French Republicans to change their form of government triumphantly established, but also, in addition, a most excellent exposition of the first principles of government was laid down, and explained, and illustrated with surprising clearness, precision, and force of language. The effects of this work can only be known by the fact of *thirty-thousand* copies being circulated in one month; by the government orders for its suppression, a sure proof of the weakness of Burke's cause, and its unanswerable logic; and by the prosecutions of Muir, Palmer, and others, whose principal *crime*, appears to have been the reading and recommending of this work. No work of the kind ever made such a sensation upon its publication, as the *Rights of Man*, and none ever tended so much to awaken the body of the people to the consideration of the principles on which societies and governments are based. But his work was but half accomplished; his penetrating mind beheld the intimate connection which existed between religion and misrule, and how the Bible—the "Sacred" groundwork of Jews and Christians—was employed to bolster up every kind of public abuse, so to correct this moral evil he next set himself to work. Instead of dealing with abstract doctrines about soul, spirit, and deity, as had been done by those before him (his object being to make himself understood by all), he entered into a minute criticism of the scriptures as the basis of the Christian religion, and proved, from the general acknowledged principles of criticism, and from the sense of moral right and wrong then admitted as correct, that these books were not only untrue and absurd, but also, the most cruel, immoral, and mischievous books ever written, sanctioning every kind of moral, social, and political evil. The *Age of Reason*, in which he thus expressed himself, was the first attempt to enable the most uncultivated to understand the absurdities of popular religious creeds, and its success has been equal to the merits of the work—great!—beyond all calculation. The *Age of Reason*, on making its appearance, was soon met with the bigots' favourite logic—persecution: prosecutions against its publishers and circulators were instituted to stay its circulation, but without avail; for, instead of succeeding in the object, they only tended to bring the obnoxious publication into more general notice, and to have it more extensively read by the public.

As might be expected, after the most unmerciful manner in which Paine assailed the Dagon of superstition, its priests looked upon him with anything but a priestly or respectful eye. But, instead of answering him in the spirit of fair dis-

cussion, with the exception of a lame attempt at reply, by the bishop of Llandaff, he was assailed by the whole clerical tribe with the most bare-faced misrepresentation of his motives and character, and the most scurrilous abuse. And down to the present day, the stock in trade of nearly all "Anti-Infidels" sermon and publication mongers, has consisted in made-up stories, pious frauds and lying fabrications, about the life, character, and death of Thomas Paine; or, according to parsonic phraseology—"infidel Tom Paine!"

The impetus thus given to anti-theological speculation and Free Inquiry, by Thomas Paine, was not allowed to die away. After his death, Richard Carlile, with a boldness of purpose which cost him, at different times, twenty years of imprisonment, has followed out the work, not so much as an original writer as a publisher, of the writings of Paine, and all others who endeavoured to annihilate superstition, in cheap and accessible forms, and in defiance of every kind of contumely and persecution. By the issuing of cheap periodicals from time to time, he also has done much to abridge the influence of prejudice. Take him all in all, there is no calculation of the extent of good which Richard Carlile has accomplished in establishing the liberty of the press on all theological and political matters; and for these labours, and the firmness with which he has borne the brunt of persecution, he is entitled to our most heartfelt respect.

The Rev. Robert Taylor, a colleague of the former for some time in the cause of Free Inquiry, has been likewise a valuable aid to the cause of mental liberty. Having been educated for the church, and well versed in that antique lore, upon which theology plumes itself so much, he was just such a person as was required to fight them on their choice vantage ground, ancient and ecclesiastical history and Biblical learning. Having seen through the follies of the popular creed, he renounced it, and commenced a crusade for its extermination, first by public lectures in refutation of Christianity, for which he was imprisoned in Oakham gaol; and next by the publication of his celebrated critical work, the *Diegesis*, in which he establishes the Pagan origin of the Christian system, and refutes the voluminous *evidences* of Lardner, Butler, and Paley, in the most able and conclusive manner. The host of historical evidence brought to bear on the question in the *Diegesis*, renders it of the highest value to the Free Inquirer and honest searcher after truth, as it furnishes a lamp to guide his footsteps through the darkest labyrinths of monkery, error and imposture, to the pure region of philosophical light.

To the *Diegesis* may be added Hennel's history of Christianity, and Dr Straus' life of Jesus, as works much calculated to destroy belief in the supernaturalism of Christianity; while hosts of other tracts, both from known and unknown

sources, have been contributing to swell the tide of free thought, and to increase its current.

Among the circumstances which latterly have been efficacious in extending anti-theological opinions may be noticed the establishment of social institutions for lectures and discussions. The disciples of Mr Owen, the celebrated philanthropist, a few years ago formed themselves into an association for the propagation of his peculiar views on morals and society, and to insure their adoption in practice as soon as possible, as a means of reforming society from its present manifold errors and imperfections. For the purpose of forming public opinion on these topics, lecture rooms were opened all over the country, and lecturers appointed, whose primary duty it was to enlighten the public on the leading principles of the social system. In agitating these questions, it was however found that every step of the progress was met by priestly invective, and theological opposition, that every principle of socialism was discussed and disproved, not upon its own intrinsic merits, but in relation to the dogmas of popular religion, and the old and absurd stories of the "sacred books." Hence it was found that before any progress could be made in the "New views of man and society," priestcraft must be bearded, its pretensions exposed, and its influence over the popular mind destroyed. For these objects, lectures were delivered and discussions held on the most tender and exciting subjects of the orthodox creeds; tracts and pamphlets on the same questions were circulated in thousands over the country, so that, by these active measures, more has been done the last few years in liberalizing the public mind, more especially the working classes, on the subject of religion, than had been done during the thirty previous years. Notwithstanding the vigilance of the clergy, their appeals to passion and prejudice—their money influence—their lies and representations—their persecutions, and their invocation of the secular powers to aid them; notwithstanding all these means and appliances, free thinking has been advancing with giant strides; and every large town can boast of its thousands that have washed themselves pure of the unclean thing, superstition. Still all this has not been accomplished without considerable individual suffering. Many have lost in business and have been ruined in worldly prospects; and some few have suffered in person for their temerity in vindicating the exercise of free thought; of which Messrs Hetherington and Cleave of London, and Mr Charles Southwell, for the issuing of the Oracle of Reason, are the latest and most important examples. Still the current flows onward, growing wider and wider, notwithstanding these clerical break-waters; and the time fast approaches when the pure and limpid waters of the sea of truth must occupy over this world the site of the

present stagnant and putrid ocean of superstition.

Leaving now the merely theological bearing of our inquiry, we shall proceed, in our next article, to take a finishing glance at the present state of metaphysical and moral science, and the leading names connected with their development, and then conclude with a brief retrospection of the whole.

Our previous reference to the philosophical speculations of France closed with the Revolution, which for a time suspended metaphysical and moral inquiry by the din of arms and the warfare of contending factions. The principal free inquirers which that country has since produced, are Biehat, Cabanis, and Comte Destutt de Tracy, philosophers who have followed in the tract of Locke and Condillac, by referring all knowledge to sensation, basing all mental phenomena on a physiological foundation, and rejecting the mere metaphysical abstractions of spiritualists and platonic speculations. These views of mental phenomena continue to predominate in France, though lately several eminent writers have endeavoured to introduce the imaginative speculations of the Germans, and the principles of Roid and Brown, known as the Scotch philosophy.

As a Free-Thinker, though not as a writer on moral and mental subjects, Laplace, the great mathematician and astronomer, stands pre-eminent among the modern thinkers of France, having always publicly expressed his unbelief in the theological idols of the day. It may also be stated with confidence that, with few exceptions, the great mass of the modern French literati and men of science are confirmed anti-superstitionists. But as France has been lately the theatre of two remarkable revolutions of opinion in reference to moral and mental science—and as these opinions have been associated with schemes for the social and political regeneration of mankind—we shall therefore be more particular in explaining the peculiarities by which these two systems are distinguished. The system to which we refer are those founded by St Simon and Fourier. In this inquiry we shall only glance at the moral features of the systems taught by these celebrated men, referring for a more explicit account of their principles to a future series of articles. We intend to issue on the origin and progress of social and political equality. St Simon's views of morals or general education, are to initiate all into the relations of social beings, to inculcate the love of all, and to direct all desires and all efforts to the common happiness. The completion of the St Simonian doctrine is to be seen in the future full development of the religious principle which it contemplates; we are told that "the religion of the future, will not be merely the result of inward feeling, a feeling or idea isolated in the assemblage of feelings and ideas of each individual; it

will be the expression of the collective mind of humanity, the rule of all its actions. Not only is religion called to take place in the social economy, but the social institution of the future will be no other than a religious institution." As all the speculations of St Simou have a relation to the peculiar system of society which he advocated, and can scarcely be presented to the reader unconnected therewith, we shall not further pursue the subject, but wait until the whole can be fully discussed at a future time.

Fourier bases his social theory upon certain doctrines of moral philosophy analogous to phrenology; the key-stone of his philosophy is this—that the natural impulses, desires, or, as he calls them, *attractions* of man, spring from his Creator, and point unerringly to his happiness. That they are the cause of evil to him now, is a proof that the system of things in which he lives is wrong, and therefore duty, restraint, punishment, are all words, relating to a social state which is not in harmony with his indestructible passions. *Attraction passionnee* is the term given by Fourier to the impulses which nature gives anterior to reflection; its essential springs being twelve radical passions, to each of which the social scheme ought to give the fullest satisfaction. Of these, five relate to the *external senses*, and they extend to the luxury or happiness of the individual; four to the affections, which bind man to family and immediate friends, tending to the formation of particular families or *groups*—they are *friendship*, *ambition* (the source of political groups), *love*, *affection for family*: and three, which are the essential sources of social organization—the *cabalistic*, or the spirit of party, of speculation—the *composite*, the spirit of enthusiasm, of accord, and *alternativeness*, or *restlessness*, which produces the love of frequent change. "Let these twelve passions have free and uncontrolled exercise, and the result will be the religious sentiment, or passion for social harmony or universal unity, just as the blending of the prismatic colours produces the white solar ray."

That which constitutes character is the dominion of one or more of these passions—in the language of phrenology, the superior development of one or more localities; the rank of the character in the scale is determined by the number of these dominant faculties, and the greater their number, the more elevated is the social destiny of the individual characters, whom Fourier calls *solitones*, have but one dominant passion; these are in the scale of character what private soldiers are in a regiment. Nature does not produce these characters by chance, but in a fixed and determinate proportion, so that when society shall have passed from its present incoherence to a state of social organization, every individuality will have its proper place, and every character will be in the universal like a necessary note in an immense con-

cert. "Nature is wiser than man; she does not produce characters in one monotonous mould, such as custom and fashion would dictate; but she produces such varieties as will form, when united, one grand harmonious whole. As with wonderful precision she adjusts the proposition of the sexes, so she adjusts the character of the individual to the wants of the social regime."

The four passions which tend to form mankind into groups, have each a material and spiritual principle: thus, the groups which friendship forms may be produced by the spiritual affinity of combination for glory, or by the material affinity of interest; those formed by love, by the material affinity of the charm of the senses, or the spiritual affinity of real affection; those of familism, by the material affinity of consanguinity, or the spiritual affinity of adoption. In the groups formed by friendship and ambition, the spiritual principle holds the first rank—material principle rules in the other two. In the two first, man has the superiority—in the two latter it belongs undoubtedly to women. Groups may be formed by the spiritual or material principle, but the attachment is most perfect when formed upon both. Groups may also be formed by the mixture of passions, but one will always be dormant. Groups may also be formed by the contrast of character.

The object of association is to afford scope for *attraction passionnee*, or the impulses and faculties of nature. The next thing to discover is a mode of association, which shall permit their free development—"which shall ratify the alliance of sound reason with nature, by guaranteeing the acquisition of riches and happiness—which are the wish of nature, to the practice of justice and truth—which are the decrees of sound reason, and can only reign by association—which shall produce *unity internal*, or peace of man with himself, by ending the internal war, which is occasioned by putting passion and attraction at variance with wisdom and law; and *unity external*, or the relation of man with God and the universe. The universe communicates with God by attraction—no creature, from the stars down to the insects, arriving at harmony; but, by following the impulses of attraction, it follows that man must, by attraction, attain the end of the Divine plan—harmony and unity."*

The philosophical theories of Fourier embraces the whole empire of matter and of mind, of things visible and invisible, of life and immortality; he extended his speculations through time and space to the very skirts of the universe, to bring in harmony, science, nature, and revelation. He claimed the discovery of the *instinctive* and the *social movements*, or the attraction of the passions and instincts, and the attraction of man towards his future destinies, as the completion of the discovery

* Victor Considerant.

which Newton made of the *material* movement or attraction of matter. The three principles of nature are, according to him, God, matter, and justice, or mathematics,—justice being to the moral world what the science of mathematics is to the physical world.

With this notice of the speculations of Fourier, which will be noticed at another time, in connection with his social system, we dismiss the moral and speculative philosophy of modern France.

A review like the present would be incomplete, were we to leave out of consideration the modern philosophy of Germany, however dreamy and speculative it may appear, besides many of the systems already noticed.

The modern German philosophy may be dated from the time Leibnitz published his views, which agreed in the most essential particulars with the mystical principles of Plato, and the speculations of Descartes. And the most eminent writer who has written in modern times is Kant, author of the *Critique of Pure Reason*.* “The whole ‘Critique of Pure Reason’ is established upon this principle, *that there is a free reason, independent of all experience and sensation*.”† The nature of this reason, according to Schulze, a friend of Kant, who gives a synopsis of his system, is “to investigate the whole store of original notions, discoverable in our understanding, and which lie at the foundation of all knowledge; and at the same time to authenticate their true descent, by showing that they are not derived from experience, but are pure products of the imagination.

1. The perceptions of objects contain, indeed, the matter of knowledge, but are in themselves blind, and not knowledge; and our soul is merely passive in regard to them.

2. If these perceptions are to furnish knowledge, the understanding must think of them, and this is possible, only through notions (conceptions) which are the peculiar form of our understanding, in the same manner as space and time are the form of our sensitive faculty.

3. These notions are active representations of our understanding faculty, and as they regard *immediately* the perceptions of objects themselves only mediately,

4. They lie in our understanding as pure notions *a priori*, at the foundation of all our knowledge. They are necessary forms, radical notions, categories (predicaments) of which all our knowledge of them must be comprehended; and the table of them follows:—

“Quantity—unity, plurality, totality.

“Quality—reality, negation, limitation.

“Relation—substance, cause, reciprocation.

“Modality—possibility, existence, necessity.”

5. Now, to think and to judge is the same thing; consequently, every notion contains a particular form of judgment concerning objects. There are four principal *genera* of judgments: they are derived from the above four possible functions of the understanding, each of which contain under it three species; namely, with respect to

“Quantity, they are universal, particular, singular judgments.

Quality, they are affirmative, negative, infinite judgments.

Relation, they are categorical, hypothetical, disjunctive judgments.

Modality, they are problematical, assertory, apodictical judgments.”

If our readers understand this *farrago* of words, it is more than we shall pretend; it is a capital specimen of ultra metaphysics.

We shall leave Kant after giving a further specimen of his philosophy, in his reasoning against philosophical necessity. In proof that the notion of a Free Will is not contradictory, he observes, that “although every human action as an event in time, must have a cause, and so *ad infinitum*; yet it is certain, that the laws of cause and effect can have a place there only, where *time* is; for the effect must be consequent upon the cause. But neither *time* nor *space* are properties of things; they are only the general *forms* under which man is allowed to view himself and the world. It follows, therefore, that man is not in time nor in space, although the forms of his intuitive ideas are time and space. If a man exist not in time nor space, he is not influenced by the laws of time and space, among which those of cause and effect hold a distinguished rank; it is, therefore no contradiction to conceive that in such an order of things man may be free.”* This incomprehensible doctrine of man existing in neither time nor space, is a sample of the paradoxes and mysteries with which the philosophy of Kant abounds.

Among the various schools which have emanated from those of Kant, those of Fichte and Schelling seem to have attracted among their countrymen the greatest number of proselytes; and these have only rendered the doctrines of their master more obscure and incomprehensible, instead of clearing away the verbiage with which they were surrounded.

* F. A. Nitsch's General and Introductory View of Kant's Principles, &c.

Printed and Published by PATON & LOVE, 10, Nelson Street, Glasgow; Hetherington, and Watson, London; Heywood, Manchester Hobson, Leeds; and W. & H. Robinson, Edinburgh.

* Born at Königsberg, in Prussia, in 1724; died in 1804. † Dr Willich.

FREE-THINKERS' INFORMATION FOR THE PEOPLE.

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MAY CHOOSE."—*Melancthon.*

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THE STRUGGLES OF PHILOSOPHY WITH SUPERSTITION AND PRIESTCRAFT
ILLUSTRATED IN THE HISTORY OF FREE INQUIRY.—*Concluded.*

ARTICLE VIII.—THE PRESENT STATE AND PROSPECTS OF PHILOSOPHY.

In addition to the *transcendental* theory of Kant, we are indebted to the Germans for the more understandable and matter of fact system of Phrenology; the founder and most celebrated propagator of the doctrine—Gall and Spurzheim being both Germans. As the leading principles of phrenology are pretty generally understood in this country, having been extensively circulated by means of cheap publications and lectures, we shall dismiss the subject with the observations, that to us it appears the nearest approach to a correct theory of the origin and nature of mental phenomena yet given to the public; referring as it does all the human propensities and qualities to the conformation of the brain and nervous system. It appears to us quite certain, that mental phenomena must be viewed in strict relation to physiological data, if we mean to arrive at correct conclusions respecting education and the formation of the human character; and in this respect phrenology has been of great service in withdrawing attention from metaphysical abstractions to the consideration of the physical law upon which all mental and moral action depends. Still, we are of opinion, that the phrenologists insist too much on the minute divisions of the brain as the causes of the different mental states, instead of keeping in view the grand leading principles of frontal elevation, breadth, and size of brain, so much insisted on by the great naturalists, Cuvier, Blumenbach, and Lawrence. The phrenologists, to our understanding, also allow too much for the force of the original organization, or primary instincts of man's nature, and too little for the modifying influence of external circumstances, to enable their theory to be very beneficial as the basis of education and social and moral reform. Still, with all these drawbacks, it is a mighty advance on the mental theories which have gone before, and, with some modifications and improvements, it appears best calculated of any system of mental philosophy yet given to the world, to be the foundation of correct moral practice, in regenerating mankind from a state of ignorance to a state of intelligence and virtue.

Leaving Germany, and returning to the British Isles, we find little to call for our notice, beyond what has already been referred to, with one illustrious exception, which demands our especial notice; presenting as it does much to command our esteem and sympathy, and pregnant with the most important interest to the human race; the exception to whom we allude is ROBERT OWEN. The moral principles of Mr Owen are deduced from the doctrine of philosophical necessity, which in his hands has been rendered less abstract, and more practical, than in the writings of the older metaphysicians. The *Books of the New Moral World*, now in the course of publication, and the "*Essays on the Formation of the Human Character*," one of his earliest writings, contain his opinions generally on the subject of morals. He makes no pretension to physiological knowledge, nor does he endeavour to frame, like the phrenologists or the followers of Condillac, a theory of mind as the basis or substratum of his moral speculations. He takes man as he has found him; and by extensive observation on, and experience of, the springs and motives of human actions, he frames his general principles of ethical and social philosophy. He stops not to inquire into the cause or causes of thought or action; but deals with the manifestations of human nature as he has found them; and out of the aggregate of these manifestations, which his penetrating and industrious mind has witnessed and classified, does he infer a new and superior philosophy of human nature. "*The Outline of the Rational System of Society*" contains a clear abridgment of his leading views, from which we present the following summary:—

1st. That Man is a *compound being*, whose character is formed of his constitution or organization at birth, and of the effects of external circumstances upon it, from birth to death; such original organization and external influences continually acting and reacting each upon the other.

2d. That Man is compelled by his original constitution to receive his *feelings* and his *convictions* independently of his *will*.

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3d. That his *feelings*, or his *convictions*, or both of them united, create the motive to action called the *will*, which stimulates him to act, and decides his actions.

4th. That the organization of no two human beings is ever precisely similar at birth; nor can art subsequently form any two individuals, from infancy to maturity, to be precisely similar.

5th. That nevertheless, the constitution of every infant, except in case of organic disease, is capable of being formed into a *very inferior*, or *very superior* being, according to the qualities of the external circumstances allowed to influence that constitution from birth.

Next follows the "Twenty Laws of Human Nature," which may be considered the foregoing "Fundamental Facts" in detail:—

I.—Human nature is a compound of animal propensities, intellectual faculties, and moral qualities, or the germs of them.

II.—These propensities, faculties, and qualities, are united in different proportions in each individual.

III.—This diversity constitutes the original difference between one individual and another.

IV.—These elements of his nature, and their proportions, are made by a power unknown to the individual, and consequently without his consent.

V.—Each individual comes into existence within certain external circumstances, which act upon his peculiar original organization, more especially during the early period of his life; and by impressing their general character upon him, form his local and national character.

VI.—The influence of these general external circumstances is modified in a particular manner, by the peculiar organization of each individual; and thus the distinctive character of each is formed and maintained through life.

VII.—No infant has the power of deciding at what period of time, or in what part of the world, he shall come into existence—of what parents he shall be born—in what religion he shall be trained—what manners, customs, or habits shall be given to him—or by what other external circumstances he shall be surrounded, from birth to death.

VIII.—Each individual is so organized, that when young, he may be made to receive either true ideas, derived from a knowledge of facts, or false notions, derived from the imagination, and in opposition to facts.

IX.—Each individual is so organized, that he must necessarily become irrational when he is made from infancy to receive, as truths, false fundamental notions; and can only become truly rational when he shall be made to receive true fundamental principles, without any admixture of error.

X.—Each individual is so organized, that when young, he may be trained to acquire injurious

habits only, or beneficial habits only, or a mixture of both.

XI.—Each individual is so organized, that he *must believe* according to the strongest conviction that is made upon his mind; which conviction cannot be given to him by his will, nor be withheld by it.

XII.—Each individual is so organized, that he *must like* that which is pleasant to him, or which, in other words, produces agreeable sensations in him; and *dislike* that which is unpleasant to him, or which, in other words, produces in him disagreeable sensations; and he cannot know, previous to experience, what particular sensations new objects will produce on any one of his senses.

XIII.—Each individual is so organized, that his *feelings* and convictions are formed *for him*, by the impressions which circumstances produce upon his individual organization.

XIV.—Each individual is so organized, that his *will* is formed *for him* by his feelings or convictions, or both; and *thus his whole character—physical, mental, and moral—is formed independently of himself.*

XV.—Each individual is so organized, that impressions which, at their commencement, and for a limited time, produce agreeable sensations, will, if continued without intermission beyond a certain period, become indifferent, disagreeable, and ultimately painful.

XVI.—Each individual is so organized, that when, beyond a certain degree of rapidity, impressions succeed each other,—they dissipate, weaken, and otherwise injure his physical, mental, or moral powers, and diminish his enjoyment.

XVII.—Each individual is so organized, that his highest health, his greatest progressive improvement, and his permanent happiness, depend upon the due cultivation of all his physical, intellectual, and moral faculties, or elements of his nature:—upon their being called into action at a proper period of life; and being afterwards temperately exercised, according to his strength and capacity.

XVIII.—Each individual is so organized, that he is made to receive what is commonly called a *bad character*, when he has been placed, from birth, amidst the most unfavourable circumstances.

XIX.—Each individual is so organized, that he is made to receive a *medium character*, when he has been created with a favourable proportion of the elements of his nature, and has been placed, from birth, amidst unfavourable circumstances:—

Or, when he has been created with an unfavourable proportion of these elements, and when the external circumstances in which he is placed are of a character to impress him with favourable sensations only:—

Or, when he has been created with a favourable

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proportion of some of these elements, and an unfavourable proportion of others, and has been placed, through life, in varied external circumstances, producing some good and some evil sensations. This compound has hitherto been the general lot of mankind.

XX.—Each individual is so organized, that he is made to receive a *superior character*, when his original constitution contains the best proportion of the elements of human nature, and when the circumstances which surround him from birth, and through life, are of a character to produce superior sensations only; or, in other words, when the laws, institutions, and customs, under which he lives, are all in unison with the laws of his nature.

Afterwards, the "Conditions of Human Happiness," which will be secured to all under the Rational System, are thus enumerated:—

I.—The possession of a good organization, physical, mental, and moral.

II.—The power of procuring, at pleasure, whatever is necessary to preserve the organization in the best state of health.

III.—The best education, from infancy to maturity, of the physical, intellectual, and moral power of all the population.

IV.—The inclination and means of promoting, continually, the happiness of our fellow-beings.

V.—The inclination and means of increasing, continually, our stock of knowledge.

VI.—The power of enjoying the best society; and more particularly of associating, at pleasure, with those for whom we feel the most regard and the greatest affection.

VII.—The means of travelling at pleasure.

VIII.—The absence of superstition, supernatural fears, and the fear of death.

IX.—Full liberty of expressing our thoughts upon all subjects.

X.—The utmost individual freedom of action, compatible with the permanent good of society.

XI.—To have the character formed for us to express the truth only upon all occasions, and to have pure charity for the feelings, thoughts, and conduct of all mankind, and a sincere good-will for every individual of the human race.

XII.—To reside in a society whose laws, institutions, and arrangements, well organized and well governed, are all in unison with the laws of human nature.

Having stated his general views in the nature of man, we are next favoured with his opinions on the much disputed topic of Religion, which are in admirable harmony with the sober and matter of fact character of his moral philosophy.

I.—That all facts yet known to man indicate that there is an external or an internal Cause of all existences, by the fact of their existence; that this all-pervading Cause of motion and change in the universe, is that Incomprehensible Power

which the nations of the world have called God, Jehovah, Lord, &c. &c.:—but that the facts are yet unknown to man which define what that Incomprehensible Power is.

II.—That it is a law of Nature obvious to our senses, that the internal and external character of all that have life upon the earth, is formed *for* them, and not by them; that, in accordance with this law, the internal and external character of man is formed *for* him, and NOT *by* him; and that the knowledge of this fact, with its all-important consequences, will necessarily create in every one a new, sublime, and pure spirit of Charity for the convictions, feelings, and conduct of the human race, and dispose them to be kind to all that has life—seeing that this varied life is formed by the same Incomprehensible Power that has created human nature, and gives man his peculiar faculties.

III.—That it is man's highest interest to acquire an accurate knowledge of those circumstances which produce EVIL to the human race, and of those which produce GOOD; and to exert all his powers to remove the former from society, and to create around it the latter only.

IV.—That this invaluable practical knowledge can be acquired solely through an extensive search after *truth*, by an accurate, patient, and unprejudiced enquiry into *facts*, as developed by Nature.

V.—That man can never attain to a state of superior and permanent happiness, until he shall be surrounded by those external circumstances which will train him, from birth, to feel pure charity and sincere affection towards the whole of his species—to speak the truth only, on all occasions, and to regard with a merciful and kind disposition all that has life.

VI.—That such superior knowledge and feelings can never be given to man under those institutions of society which have been founded on the mistaken supposition that man forms his *feelings* and *convictions* by his *will*, and, therefore, has merit or demerit, or deserves praise or blame, or reward or punishment, for them.

VII.—That under institutions formed in accordance with the Rational System of Society, this superior knowledge and these superior dispositions may be given to the whole of the human race without chance of failure, except in cases of organic disease.

VIII.—That in consequence of this superior knowledge, and these superior dispositions, the contemplation of Nature will create in every mind feelings of high adoration, too sublime and pure to be expressed in forms of words, for that Incomprehensible Power which acts in and through all nature, everlastingly composing, decomposing, and recomposing the material of the universe, producing the endless variety of life, of mind, and of organized form:

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IX.—That the practice of the rational religion will, therefore, consist in promoting, to the utmost of our power, the well-being and happiness of every man, woman, and child, without regard to their class, sect, sex, party, country, or colour; and its worship, in those inexpressible feelings of wonder, admiration, and delight, which, when a man is surrounded by superior circumstances only, will naturally arise from the contemplation of the infinity of space, of the eternity of duration, of the order of the universe, and of that incomprehensible power, by which the atom is moved, and the aggregate of nature is governed.

Lastly, we have his opinions respecting liberty of conscience and the free right of opinion.

I.—Every one shall have equal and full liberty to express the dictates of his conscience on religious, and all other subjects.

II.—No one shall have any other power than fair argument to control the opinions or belief of another.

III.—No praise or blame, no merit or demerit, no reward or punishment, shall be awarded for any opinions or belief.

IV.—But all, of every religion, shall have equal right to express their opinions respecting the Incomprehensible Power which moves the atom and controls the universe, and to worship that power under any form or in any manner agreeable to their consciences—not interfering with the equal rights of others.

The views of Mr Owen respecting the production and distribution of health, for which his ethical system is preparatory, will be fully noticed in another place, when the various systems of political and social equality are discussed. Sufficient has been stated here to give the reader a tolerable correct idea of the leading principles of Mr Owen respecting human nature and morals, and these alone come within the scope of the present articles. With this outline of the moral principles of the *Social System*, we close our general review of the progress of philosophy.

We have now glanced at the leading facts connected with the history of Moral Philosophy and Free Inquiry, beginning with the earliest period, of which the light of history affords any satisfactory explanation, and ending with the latest and most important improvement effected in the Science of Man, by Robert Owen. In the brief space devoted to the inquiry, we have endeavoured to present the reader with the most useful and important facts illustrative of this great subject, and of the difficulties and struggles which have beset the most advanced minds that have arisen from time to time, as the great vanguards of Free Inquiry. We have seen, in the early and dim vista of primitive society, the few and simple germs of truth then known, enveloped in an atmosphere of error: the most enlightened minds of the times lending themselves to the purposes of mystery,

and rendering the elements of knowledge subservient to the interests of superstition and imposture. Such we have learned were the practices of the founders and philosophers of the early Eastern nations—of Hermes, Zoroaster, Orpheus, and Pythagoras. Gradually we have observed the disservice of knowledge and superstition as society advanced, and as the extension of facts, limited and corrected the play of the imagination. Hence, the beginning and progress of the struggle between science and superstition as the consequence of this separation, evidenced in the practice of the more matured society of Ancient Greece—in the martyrdom of Socrates, the persecutions of Anaxagoras, Diogenes, and Aristotle, and the calumnies and misrepresentations exerted against such men as Democritus and Epicurus. This advanced and independent state of the philosophical mind, resulting from the progress of human reason, we have illustrated in the speculations and moral principles advanced by the Socratic and Epicurean Schools. From this we have traced Free Inquiry through the ramifications of the Roman Empire, to the breaking up of the latter gigantic combination; through the darkness and shadows of the early and middle Christian ages; and through the dawn and morning of the revival of learning, we have brought it down to the present day; presenting in our progress, every fact illustrative of the general question, and showing the gradual decay of superstition, the rise and extension of useful knowledge, the growth of moral truth, and the gradual triumph of the natural and rational over the superstitious and metaphysical. To those lightly versed in the lore of bygone times, whose time and means prevent them perusing large and expensive treatises, with truth in most instances, largely and injuriously alloyed with error, we have addressed our humble yet *truth-speaking* treatises, that briefly, yet clearly and satisfactorily, they might be put in possession of those facts that illustrate the march of humanity through the great phases of its intellectual and moral existence. And we trust that, in this attempt, our labours have not been in vain.

Having finished this subject, we shall, in the forthcoming Numbers, criticise some of the popular features of the Christian system, as additions to the Articles of the first seven Numbers of our publication; and at a future stage shall take up, as a companion to the Articles just finished, the Origin and Progress of the Principles of Social and Political Equality.

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"LET ALL HAVE FULL LIBERTY TO TEACH AND MAINTAIN WHATEVER OPINIONS THEY
MAY CHOOSE."—*Melancthon.*

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THE CONTRADICTION AND ABSURD DOCTRINES, RULES, AND CEREMONIES WHICH CHRISTIAN CHURCHES HAVE FOUNDED UPON THE BIBLE.

WE now resume the discussion of the important questions, arising out of the popular religions of this country, as a continuation of the subjects of our early numbers, and in the present article shall devote ourselves to the discussion of the doctrines, rites, and ceremonies arising out of the sacred book of Christianity—the bible. These doctrines being considered of the greatest import by the orthodox believer, and held as the foundation of all schemes of salvation; faith in things unseen and incomprehensible, forming the major feature of all our systems of superstition, hence the value of having those doctrines thoroughly and fairly discussed. And this task we shall endeavour to execute to the best of our ability in the present treatise.

In a revelation professing to emanate from a wise and benevolent God, his own character and attributes, at least, ought to be stated in such language as to leave no room for doubt and uncertainty. On this point, however, there is a wide and irreconcilable difference of opinion. The Trinitarians find in the bible, that there is three persons in the Godhead, and that these three are one. But, in discussing and explaining this matter, theologians differ widely, charging one another with mutual heresy. There is said to be even thirty or forty different Trinities among Christians.* The Unitarians find in the same bible, that the Father (the first person in the Trinity) alone is God, and as for the Son it is said, "they all unite in one deadly heresy, the denial of his Godhead,"† and also of the Holy Ghost. There is also much difference of opinion among them; some regarding Christ as a deified man, others as a simple man. Of these, the Arian scheme is regarded as a "corruption of the Christian doctrine, which, in the enormity and the magnitude of its consequences, is little short of Trinitarianism itself."‡ The Swedenborgians maintain that Christ is the only true God, and "hold Arians, Socinians, and Calvinists in devout abhorrence."§

Now, this discussion involves most important consequences; for, if Trinitarianism be true, Unitarianism must be "blasphemous" and false, as representing Deity under a degraded aspect; and if Unitarianism be true, then, in the language of Dr Wardlaw, the "Believers in the Trinity, in their mode of homage, are, without doubt, as really guilty of *idolatry* as the worshippers of the deified heroes of Greece and Rome."* Hence the fierce feud between these two sects. Dr South calls the Unitarians "impious blasphemers, whose infamous pedigree runs back from wretch to wretch in a direct line to the devil himself, and who are fitter to be crushed by the civil magistrate, as destructive to government and society, than to be confuted, as merely heretics in religion."† The Trinity system, according to Norris, is declared to be the very foundation of Christianity, and "that, without a belief in it, a man can no more be a Christian, than he can be a man without a rational soul;"‡ whereas, respecting the other side, Dean Tucker affirms that if Christ be only a man, the Scriptures must be false, and Christ and his disciples be ranked among the greatest hypocrites and impostors that ever appeared on earth."§

Respecting the miraculous conception, the most conflicting opinions are abroad. The Unitarians reject it as a fiction, as absurd as that of Jupiter and Diana; and Dr Bailey, in his *Life of Bishop Fisher*, declares that the doctrine of "a virgin daughter producing her father, and a creature her creator," is "a blasphemous impiety." Of course this absurd notion respecting the birth of Christ is a chief element of the orthodox church, and is required by its votaries to be implicitly believed.

Another holy personage, about whom there has been much discussion, is the Virgin Mary, who is fervently worshipped by the Catholics as the mother of the Creator of the Universe, and the

* Monthly Repository, 1828. † Dr Howker.

‡ Belsham's Letters.

§ Boyne and Bennet's Hist. iv. 135.

* Wardlaw's Discourses, p. 321.

† South's Sermons.

‡ Norris's Reason and Faith, p. 92.

§ Dean Tucker's view, p. 12.

Queen of Heaven. The Protestants denounce this worship as the grossest idolatry that perhaps was ever committed in the world—such as no good Christian can think of without horror, nor any one partake of without the hazard of his salvation.* The whole of the Protestant world denounce the worship of the virgin and saints as idolatrous, destroying the intent of religion, and silently bringing back to Christianity the heathen multitude of deities.†

Volumes could be filled with discrepancies on doctrinal speculations, all of which their respective advocates pretend to discover *clearly in the Bible*. Thus, Horne maintains the reality of the FALL of Man, and the introduction of sin into the world by Adam. He says that “the whole scheme of introduction of sin into the world by Adam is unnatural;” others call it impious, and an absurd unscriptural fiction. The means and measures of God’s favour have been the sources of endless contention among Calvinists, Sublapsarians, Subalapsarians, Arminians, Baxterians, Antimobians, &c. *Calvinism*, according to Belsham, is a tremendous doctrine; and had it been really taught by Jesus and his apostles, their gospel might truly have been denominated a message of wrath and injustice, of terror and despair; and Dr Priestley viewed it as the extravagance of error, and a mischievous compound of impiety and idolatry. A large section find in the Bible the doctrine of ELECTION, and “that most awful but *just* decree of REPROBATION, whereby God first stultifies those whom he means to destroy.”‡ Good works by others are held to be of greater importance than faith; while some look on belief as the grand step towards salvation, and good works as of very little importance. Special and instantaneous CONVERSION is advocated by some as not necessary to salvation; others, that to “hope for salvation, without being absolutely assured of it, is to be already in a state of damnation.”§

ATONEMENT for the sins of men by the blood of Christ, is stated to be so clear that there is no proposition in the whole circle of science more capable of satisfactory demonstration. Yet, of this demonstrative doctrine, there are no less than five different schemes, all of them called by the same name, and each of them the *only scriptural doctrine*. Its opponents, in reply to this demonstrative doctrine, say that it is an “impious anti-Christian doctrine, highly injurious to the glory of the divine attributes, and absolutely irreconcilable to the most obvious dictates of that reason which God himself has given us—that not a word is advanced on the subject, from the beginning to the end of the New Testament,—and if it could be proved to be contained in the gospel, it would prove that

Revelation is a cheat, and Christianity a forgery.”*

Another horrible doctrine entertained by a large sect of Christians (the Catholics) is, that of a belief in a purgatory, dooming myriads of suffering heretics to excruciating sufferings, from the having neglected the salutary application of a few masses. The MASS, which is the foundation of *transubstantiation*, is another doctrine of the same church. By the words of consecration, the bread and wine are instantaneously changed into the real and substantial body and blood of Christ; they then become an object of worship, and when offered up by the priest, they are a propitiatory sacrifice for the living and the dead. These are all “blasphemous and dangerous deceits,” according to the Thirty-nine Articles, and “downright idolatry,” according to all Protestants; while the Quakers obstinately contend that neither Mass nor Lord’s Supper were instituted by Christ and his apostles. Protestants cannot deny that the literal and grammatical sense of the Scriptures is in favour of transubstantiation, and therefore, to get rid of it, they are obliged to have recourse to arguments from reason. In reply to this doctrine, Dr Trapp says, “Should I find in the Bible such a proposition as this:—that a piece of bread is really and truly a human body, or that the same body can be in ten thousand places at once, I could not believe it. God could not affirm this. Nay, should I see a man raise the dead, and declare the above proposition to be true, I could not believe him, because I know the thing to be impossible in reason and nature.”† In vain does the Catholic remind the Protestant that he is audaciously “rejecting the testimony and authority of millions in favour of this doctrine, not only in the present age, but in all ages of Christianity; that he must believe, if he be a Christian, was carried in procession by the Jews in a box; that Christ appeared in two places at once, John xxii, ver. 26; Acts iii, ver. 21; that the Bible miracles are contrary to reason, nature, and the senses: as Exodus xiv, ver. 29; 2d Kings vi, ver. 5; Mark xv, ver. 26; Daniel vii, ver. 9; that he believes in such anti-rational doctrines as the conception, the incarnation, &c.”‡

With respect to the *object* as well as the *mode* of worship, Christians labour under complete uncertainty. What appears to some essential to acceptable worship is rejected by others as pregnant with destructive superstition, and hostile to all genuine devotion. The forms and ceremonies, as well as the doctrines, having been the causes of endless contentions and disputes in the Christian Church.

The Bible furnishes the Catholics with instructions appointing the *Pope* as supreme head of the Church and Vicar of Christ; other Christians,

* Abp. Wake’s Church Catechism.

† Porteus’s Confutation of Popery.

‡ Vaughan. Art. 18.

§ Wesley and Hawker.

* Belsham’s Christian Reformer, 1816.

† Church of England Defended, p. 14.

‡ Manning’s Single Combat.

from the same source, prove the Pope to be an impious usurper. In the same Bible the Episcopalians find the order of *Bishops* descending in uninterrupted succession from the apostles, and they view all Dissenters who act without their ordination as "Men who ought to be detested as thieves and robbers.*" The Presbyterians reject both Pope and Bishops as unscriptural, and maintain that ministers and deacons are the only dignitaries sanctioned by the "Holy Text."

On this subject of doctrine and worship, Lord Kaimes has the following very judicious reflections:—

"Forms and ceremonies are visible acts which make a deep impression on the vulgar. People, however, governed by what they see and hear, are more addicted to external acts of devotion than to heart-worship, which is not known but by reflection.

"It will be no excuse for relying so much on forms and ceremonies that they are innocent, but not so in their consequences. Religious rites that contradict not any passion, are keenly embraced and punctually performed; and, men flattering that they have thus been punctual in their duty to God, give vent to their passions against men. 'They pay tithes of mint and anise and cummin, but omit the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith.' Upon such a man religion sits extremely light. As he seldom exercises any act of genuine devotion, he thinks of the Deity with ease and familiarity. How otherwise is it accountable, that the plays termed *Mysteries* could be relished, where mean and perhaps dissolute persons are brought on the stage, acting *Jesus Christ*, the *Virgin Mary*, and even God himself. Bartolus the celebrated, in order to show the form of proceeding in a court of justice, imagines a process between the Devil and mankind. The Devil cites mankind to appear at the tribunal of *Jesus Christ*, claiming them as belonging to him by Adam's fall. He swells into rage, demanding whether any one dares to appear in their behalf. Against the *Virgin Mary*, offering herself as their advocate, the devil makes two objections—1st, that being the mother of the Judge, her influence would be too great. 2d, That a woman is debarred from being an advocate; and these objections are supported by numberless quotations from the *Corpus Juris*. The Virgin on her part, quotes texts permitting women to appear for widows, orphans, and for persons in distress. She is allowed to plead for mankind as coming under the last article. The Devil urges presumption, as the having been in possession of mankind ever since the fall. The Virgin answers, that a *mala-fide possessor* cannot acquire by prescription. Prescription being repelled, the parties go to the merits of the cause, which are learnedly discussed with texts from the Pandects.

The memoirs of the French Academy of *Belles Lettres*, have the following story:—A monk returning from a house which he durst not visit in daylight, had a river to cross. The boat was overturned by Satan, and the monk was drowned, when he was beginning to invoke the Virgin Mary. Two Devils having laid hold of his soul were stopped by two angels. 'My Lords' said the devils, 'true it is, and not a fable, that God for his friends; but this monk was an enemy to God, and we are carrying him to hell.' After much altercation, it was proposed by the angels, to refer the dispute to the Virgin Mary. The devils were willing to accept of God for judge, because he would judge according to law. 'But from the Virgin Mary,' said they, 'we expect no justice; she would break to atoms every gate of hell, rather than suffer one to remain there a moment who pays any worship to her image. She may say that black is white, and that puddled water is pure—God never contradicts her. The day on which God made his mother was a fatal day to us.'"

People who profess the same religion, and differ only in forms and ceremonies, may justly be compared to neighbouring states, who are commonly bitter enemies to each other, if they have any difference. At the same time, dissocial passions never rage so furiously as under the mask of religion; for in that case they are held to be meritorious, as exerted in the cause of God. This observation is but too well verified in the disputes among Christians. In the Armenian form of baptism, the priest says, at the first immersion, in *name of the Father*; at the second, in *name of the Son*; at the third, in *name of the Holy Ghost*. This form is bitterly condemned by the Romish church, which appoints the three persons of the Trinity to be joined in the same expression in token of their union. Strahlenberg gives an account of a Christian sect in Russia, which differs from the established Greek church in the following particulars: 1st, In public worship they repeat *Halleluiahs* but twice; and it is a mortal sin to repeat it thrice. 2d, In celebrating mass, not five but seven loaves ought to be used. 3d, The cross stamped upon a mass-loaf ought to have eight corners. 4th, In signing with the cross at prayers, the end of the ring finger must be joined to the end of the thumb, and the two intermediate fingers be held out at full length. How trifling are these differences! and yet for those differences, all who dissent from them are held unclean, and no better than Pagans: they will not eat nor drink with any of the established church; and if a person of that church happen to sit down in a house of theirs, they wash and purify the seat.

The following few instances, taken from a large mass of material, will show what contemptible trifles in rite and ceremony have at different times engaged the attention of the church, engendering the most bitter enmity, and leading to the slaughter

* Rogers on the Church, p. 65.

and destruction of brethren of the same faith:— In the fifth century, it was the employment of more than one council to determine whether the *Mother of God*, or the *Mother of Christ*, was the proper title of the Virgin Mary. In the sixth century, a bitter controversy arose, whether Christ's body was corruptible. In the seventh century, Christians were divided about the volition of Christ;—whether he had one or two wills, and how his will operated. In the eighth and ninth centuries, the Greek and Latin churches divided about the Holy Ghost, whether he proceeded from the Father and Son, or from the Father only. In the eleventh century, there arose a warm contest between the Greek and Latin churches, about using unleavened bread in the eucharist. In the fourteenth century, it was a controverted question between Pope John XXII. and the divines of his time, whether souls in their intermediate state see God, or only the human nature of Christ. Franciscans have suffered death in multitudes about the form of their hood. It was at one time disputed between the Dominicans and Franciscans, whether Christ had any property. The Pope, alarmed for the consequences of such agitation, pronounced the negative proposition to be a pestilential and blasphemous doctrine, subversive of the Catholic faith. Many councils were held at Constantinople, to determine what sort of light the apostles saw on Mount Tabor: it was solemnly pronounced to be the eternal light with which God is encircled, and which may be termed his energy or operation, but is distinct from his nature or essence. An opinion prevailed universally in the Christian church, from the eighth century down to the Reformation, that *liberal* donations to God, to a saint, or to the church, would produce pardon for the grossest sins. During that period, the building of churches and monasteries was in high vogue. This doctrine of indulgences proved a plentiful harvest of wealth to the clergy; for the great and opulent, who are commonly the grossest sinners, compounded freely for their transgressions. The beginning of the Reformation arose from Martin Luther setting himself in open hostility to this absurd and demoralizing doctrine. A book of notes was published by the authority of the Pope, containing prices for absolutions of the most heinous sins that men can commit. The doctrines of the Christian church, down to the reformation, were of the most slavish and degrading character; consisting of the absolute authority of Mother Church; the merits of the saints and their credit in the court of heaven; the dignity, glory, and love of the blessed Virgin; the efficacy of relics; the intolerable fire of purgatory; and the vast importance of indulgences. St. Eloy, bishop of Noxon, in the seventh century, and canonized by the Church of Rome, delivers the following doctrine:—"He is a good Christian who goes frequently to church; who presents his oblations upon the altar; *who tastes not the*

fruit of his own industry, till part be consecrated to God; who, when the holy festivals approach, lives chastely with his own wife for several days; and who can repeat the creed and the Lord's Prayer. Redeem, then, your souls from destruction, while you have the means in your power; offer presents and tithes to churchmen; come more frequently to church; humbly implore the patronage of saints. If you observe these things, you may, in the day of judgment, go with confidence to the tribunal of the eternal Judge, and say, Give to us, O Lord, for we have given freely unto thee."

To exhibit still further the ridiculous extremes to which the Christian church has carried its rites and ceremonies, and the immense importance which it has attached to them, we shall place before the reader an extract from the Roman Catholic Missal—a book of absolute authority with Roman Catholics. It is in reference to the mode in which the ceremony of the mass should be conducted. The passage goes on to say—

"Mass may be deficient in the matter, in the form, in the minister, or in the action. First, *In the matter.* If the bread be not of wheat, or if there be too great a mixture of other grain, that it cannot be called wheat bread, or if any way corrupted, it cannot be called a sacrament. If it be made with rose water, or any other distilled water, it is doubtful whether it makes a sacrament or not. Though corruption have begun, or though it be leavened, it makes a sacrament, but the celebrator *sins grievously.*

"If the celebrator, before consecration, observe that the host is corrupted, or is not of wheat, he must take another host. After that consecration, he must still take another and swallow it: after which he must also swallow the first, or preserve it in some place with reverence. But if he have swallowed the first, before observing its defects, he must nevertheless swallow also the perfect host, because the precept about the perfection of the sacrament is of greater weight than that of taking it fasting. If the consecrated host disappear by an accident, as by wind, by a miracle, or by some animal, another must be consecrated.

"If the wine be quite sour, or putrid, or made of unripe grapes, or be mixed with so much water as to spoil the wine, it is no sacrament. If the wine have begun to sour or to be corrupted, or be quite new, or not mixed with water, or mixed with rose water, or other distilled water, it makes a sacrament, but the celebrator *sins grievously.*

"If the priest before consecration, observe that the materials are not proper, he must stop, if proper materials cannot be got; but after consecration he must proceed to avoid giving scandal. If proper materials can be procured by writing, he must write for them, that the sacrifice may not remain imperfect.

"Second, *in form.* If any of the words of consecration be omitted, or any of them be

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changed into words of a different meaning, it is no sacrament: if they be changed into words of the same meaning, it makes a sacrament; but the celebrator sins grievously.

"Third, *in the minister*. If he does not intend to make a sacrament, but to cheat; if there be any part of the wine or any wafer he has not in his eye, and does not intend to consecrate; if he have before him eleven wafers, and intends to consecrate only ten, not determining what ten he intends: in these cases the consecration does not hold, because intention is requisite. If he thinks there are ten only, and intends to consecrate all before him, they are all consecrated; therefore, priests ought always to have such intention. If the priest thinking he has but one wafer, shall, after the consecration find two sticking together, he must take them both. And he must take of all that remains of the consecrated matter; for they all belong to the same sacrifice. If in consecrating, the intention be not actual by wandering of the mind, but virtual in approaching the altar, it makes a sacrament; though priests should be careful to have intention both virtual and actual.

"Besides intention, the priest may be deficient in disposition of mind. If he be suspended, or degraded, or excommunicated, or under mortal sin, he makes a sacrament, but sins grievously. He may be deficient also in disposition of body. If he have not fasted from midnight, if he have tasted water, or any other drink or meat, even in the way of medicine, he cannot celebrate or communicate. If he have taken meat or drink before midnight, even though he have not slept, nor digested it, he does not sin. But on account of the perturbation of mind, which bars devotion, it is prudent to refrain.

"If any remains of meat, sticking in the month, he swallowed with the host, they do not prevent communicating, provided they be swallowed not as meat, but as spittle. The same is to be said, if in washing the mouth, a drop of water be swallowed, provided it be against our will.

"Fourth—*In the action*. If any requisite be wanting, it is no sacrament; for example, if it be celebrated out of holy ground, or upon an altar not consecrated, or not covered with three napkins; if there be no wax candles; if it be not celebrated between day-break and noon; if the celebrator have not said matins with creeds; if he omit any of the sacerdotal robes; if these robes and the napkins be not blessed with a bishop; if there be no clerk present to serve, or one who ought not to serve, a woman, for example; if there be no chalice, the cup of which is gold, or silver, or pewter; if the vestment be not of clean linen, adorned with silk in the middle, and blessed by a bishop; if the priest celebrate with his head covered; if there be no missal present, though he have it by heart.

"If a gnat or spider fall into the cup after consecration, the priest must swallow it with the blood,

if he can, otherwise let him take it out, wash it with wine, burn it, and throw it with the washings into holy grounds. If poison fall into the cup, the blood must be poured on tow, or on a linen cloth, to remain till it be dry, then be burned, and the ashes be thrown upon holy ground. If the host be poisoned, it must be kept in a tabernacle till it be corrupted.

"If the blood freeze in winter, put warm cloths about the cup; if that be not sufficient, put the cup in boiling water.

"If any of Christ's blood fall on the ground by negligence, it must be *licked up with the tongue*, and the place scraped; the scrapings must be burned, and the ashes buried in holy ground.

"If the priest vomit the eucharist, and the species appear entire, *it must be licked up most reverently*. If a nausea prevent that to be done, it must be kept till it be corrupted. If the species do not appear, let the vomit be burned, and the ashes thrown upon holy ground."

After believing this *farrago* of nonsense, it would be no difficulty to get the assent of the Roman Catholic to any proposition however monstrous and absurd, provided it was given utterance to by the Pope: to such a state of mental prostration does superstition reduce her votaries.

The Church of England, though professing to be a reformed institution, is just as ridiculous and absurd, in most of its doctrines and ceremonies, as the Church of Rome. Can anything be more unintelligible and contradictory, than the Albanasian creed, or the thirty-nine articles, which, by act of Parliament, a Christian in England is called upon to believe, under the pain of eternal damnation. Such dogmas seem to be tests how far mankind will bow in slavish submission to the tyrannical authority of proud and arrogant priests.

The whole ritual of the English Church service is a parcel of most ridiculous mummerly, unworthy of the least respect or patronage from thinking and intelligent men. Nor are the Dissenting bodies much in the advance of the churches of Rome or of England in these respects. The Calvinist insist on the horrible doctrines of Predestination and Election, in which the Deity is represented decreeing from all eternity—that a select few shall be allowed the privilege of going to a psalm-singing monotonous heaven; while the great majority shall, by a similar fiat, be handed over to be tortured to all eternity in hell by the devil; or, as it is pithily and sarcastically expressed in "Holy Willie's Prayer:"—

"O thou, who in the Heavens does dwell,
Who has made me like unto thyself,
Sends me to Heaven and ten to Hell
A' for thy glory;
And no for any guid or ill
They're done afore thee."

Desert has nothing to do with the Calvinist creed. God is both the doomer and the avenger—the party that first declares that man must err—that he must act in a given manner for good or evil, independently of his will as a controlling power; and yet, notwithstanding, rewards or punishes to all eternity the poor wretches,

“Whom he created in his sport

To triumph in their torments.”

Such a creed is the perfection of demonism; transforming the God of its worship into a

“Merciless and pitiless fiend,

Whose mercy is a nickname for the rage

Of tameless tigers thirsting for men's blood.”

Yet, this is the foundation of the religious belief of the great majority of the people of Scotland, and of a larger portion of the English Dissenters.

The Methodists, in a great number of instances, are attached to the rites, ceremonies, and doctrines of the Church of England, especially the Wesleyans, to which they superadd many raving and fanatical opinions of their own about the influence of the spirit and saving grace; while in their practices they exhibit the wildest specimens of bigotry and fanaticism that this parson-ridden and gospel-be-deviled country can exhibit. And for deep cunning, and deceit, and whining cant, they are unsurpassed.

Wherever we direct our attention, we find the whole times of the Christian world, throughout its hundred sects, taken up with unintelligible doctrines and foolish and absurd rites and ceremonies; every one of which their respective advocates base upon the Bible, and defend with scripture arguments and quotations.

Of what value then can that book be which allows such a wide latitude and contradiction of doctrine, and which furnishes arguments for the most opposite opinions and views concerning rites and ceremonies? Of no value whatever. It is a stumbling block in the path of all social and moral improvement, which must be removed out of the way ere we can accomplish any amount of good for the human race. Do men quarrel and dispute about the theorems of Euclid? Do they not rather all come to the same conclusions when they have studied and understand them. Do philosophers contend for the most opposite conclusions respecting the established facts of science? No; they all agree about that which is demonstrable in mathematics and physical science. If any of the books of the bible were the emanation of Divine intelligence, they would be equally intelligible with the theorems of geometry or algebra, and the facts of science, and all who studied them would come to the same conclusion. The absence of this unanimity, the worse than absence of unanimity, the glaring contradictions which prevail among Christians, prove the incoherency and non-understandable nature of the foundation on which all modes of Christian faith rests.

The fatal practice of uniting morality with the

doctrines, rites, and ceremonies of religion, is well expressed by Lord Kaimes in his sketches of Man. He says, “in the practice of religion, the laying too great weight in forms, ceremonies, and other external arbitrary acts, has an unhappy tendency on morality. *That error has infected every religion.* The Ladder, the bible of the Gaures, prohibits calumny and detraction, lying, stealing, adultery, and fornication. It, however, enervates morality and religion, by placing many trifling acts on a level with the most important duties. It enjoins the destruction of five kinds of reptiles, frogs, mice, ants, serpents, and flies that sting. It teaches that to walk barefoot profanes the ground. Great regard for water is enjoined; it must not be used during the night; and when set upon a fire, a third part of the pot must be empty to prevent boiling over. The Bramins have wofully degenerated from their original institutions, thinking at present that religion consists in forms and ceremonies. As soon as a child is born, the word *oom* must be pronounced over it, otherwise it will be eternally miserable; its tongue must be rubbed with consecrated meal; the third day of the moon it must be carried into the open air, with its head to the north. The inhabitants of Formosa believe in Hell; but it is only for punishing those who fail to go naked in certain seasons, or who wear cotton instead of silk. In the time of Gengis Kan it was held in Tartary a mortal sin to put a knife into the fire—to whip a horse with his bridle, or to break one bone with another; and yet these pious Tartars held treachery, robbery, and murder, to be no sins. Would one believe that a tribunal was established by Charlemagne more horrible than the inquisition itself? It was established in Westphalia, to punish with death, every Saxon who eat meat in Lent. A law was established, for the same end, in Flanders and several other places, in the beginning of the seventeenth century.

“Listen to a celebrated writer * on the same subject:—“It is certain that in every religion, however sublime, many of the votaries, perhaps the greatest number, will still seek the Divine favour, not by virtue or good morals, which alone can be acceptable to a perfect being, but either by frivolous observances, by intemperate zeal, by rapturous ecstasies, or by the belief of mysterious and absurd opinions. When the old Romans were attacked by a pestilence, they never ascribed their sufferings to their vices, or dreamed of repentance and amendment. They never thought that they were the general robbers of the world, whose ambition and avarice made desolate the earth and reduced opulent nations to want and beggary. They only created a dictator in order to drive a nail into a door; and, by that means, they thought that they had sufficiently appeased their incensed Deity. Thus, gradually, the essen-

* Natural History of Religion, by David Hume.

tials of religion wear out of mind by the attention given to forms and ceremonies; these intercept and exhaust the whole stock of devotion which ought to be reserved for the higher exercises of religion. The neglect or transgression of more punctilious are punished as heinous crimes; while serious really heinous are suffered to pass with impunity."

The absurdity of thus attaching the highest importance to dogmas and ritual forms, is admirably satirized by Voltaire in the subjoined article from his celebrated *Philosophical Dictionary*. "We know" (he says) "that all belief taught by the Church is a dogma which we must embrace. It is a pity that there are dogmas received by the Latin Church and rejected by the Greek. But if unanimity is wanting, charity replaces it. It is, above all, between hearts that union is required."

I think that we can relate a dream to the purpose, which has already found favour in the estimation of many peaceably disposed persons:—

"On the 18th of February, in the year 1763 of the vulgar era, the sun entering the sign of the fishes, I was transported to heaven, as all my friends can bear witness. The mare Borac of Mahomet was not my steed, neither was the fiery chariot of Elijah my carriage. I was not carried on the elephant of Somocodom, the Siamese, nor on St Anthony's pig. I avow with frankness that my journey was made I know not how.

"It will be easily believed that I was dazzled; but it will not so easily be credited, that I witnessed the judgment of the dead. And who were the judges? They were—be not displeased at it—all those who have done good to man. Confucius, Salm, Socrates, Litus, Antoninus, Epictetus, Charron, De Thon, Chancellor de l' Hospital, and all the great men who, having taught and practised the virtues that God requires, seemed to be the only persons possessing the right of pronouncing his decrees.

"I shall not describe on what thrones they were seated, or how many celestial were prostrated before the eternal architect of all worlds, or what a crowd of the inhabitants of these innumerable worlds appeared before the judges. I shall not even give an account of several little interesting peculiarities which were exceedingly striking.

"I remarked that every spirit who pleaded his cause, and displayed his specious pretensions, had beside him all the witnesses of his actions. For example, when Cardinal Lorraine boasted of having caused some of his opinions to be adopted by the Council of Trent, and demanded eternal life as the price of his orthodoxy, there immediately appeared around him twenty leaders of the court, all bearing on their foreheads the number of their interviews with the Cardinal. I also saw those who had concerted with him the foundations of the infamous league. All the accomplices of his wicked designs surrounded him.

"Over against Lorraine, was John Calvin, who

boasted in his gross *patois* of having trampled upon the papal idol, after others had overthrown it. 'I have written against painting and scripture,' said he, 'I have made it apparent that good works are of no avail, and I have proved that it is diabolical to dance a minuet. Send away Cardinal Lorraine quickly, and place me by the side of St Paul. As he spoke, there appeared by his side a lighted pile: a dreadful spectre, wearing around his neck a Spanish frill, arose half burnt from the flames, with dreadful shrieks. 'Monster!' cried he; 'execrable monster, tremble! recognize that Serrietus whom thou comest to perish by the most cruel torments, because he had disputed with thee on the manner in which three persons can form one substance.' Then all the judges commanded that Cardinal Lorraine should be flung into the abyss, but that Calvin should be punished still more rigorously.

"I saw a prodigious crowd of spirits, each of which said 'I have believed! I have believed!' but on their foreheads it was written, 'I have acted,' and they were condemned. The Jesuit Le Tellier appeared boldly with the full unigenitus in his hand, but there suddenly arose at his side a heap, consisting of two thousand Lettres-de-cachet. A Jansenist set fire to them, and Le Tellier was burnt to a cinder, while the Jansenist, who had no less caballed than the Jesuit, had his share of the flames.

"I saw approach from right and left, troops of fakirs, lalapoins, bonzes, and black, white, and grey monks, who all imagined that to make their court to the Supreme Being, they must either sing, scourge themselves, or walk quite naked. 'What good have you done to man?' was the query. A dead silence succeeded to this question. No one dared to answer; and they were all conducted to the mad houses of the universe, the largest buildings imaginable.

"One cried out, that he believed in the metamorphoses of Xaëd—another in those of Somoncoodem. 'Bacchus stopped the sun and the moon,' said the one—"the gods resuscitated Pelops," said the other. 'Here is the bull in *Cæna Domini*!' said a new comer, and the officer of the court exclaimed—"To Bedlam, to Bedlam!"

"When all these causes were gone through, I heard this proclamation—"By the eternal Creator, Preserver, Rewarder, Revenger, Forgiver, &c. be it known to all the inhabitants of the hundred thousand millions of worlds, that it hath pleased us to form, that we never judge any sinners in reference to their own shallow ideas, but only as to their actions—Such is our JUSTICE."

"I own that this was the first time I ever heard such an edict; all those which I have heard, on the little grain of dust on which I was born, ended with these words:—Such is our PLEASURE."

We have now, at considerable length, pointed out the contradictory character of the Christian

doctrines derived from the Bible; and also exposed the contemptible rites and ceremonies which are at the foundation of every system of Christian worship throughout the world. In our next we shall exhibit the bigotry and fanaticism which has flowed from these dreams of disordered imaginations. Meanwhile, we bid our readers adieu.

THE CLERGY.

Officers of God Almighty's Revenue: who also are a board of commissioners for managing his power, or rather their own power by his ministrations.

ORIGINAL SIN.

The slightest acquaintance with the real principles of the human mind, with the manner in which its faculties are developed, *with the entire dependence of its ideas, its dispositions and its habits on the circumstances in which it is placed*, must not only make this doctrine appear, as indeed it is, disgusting and horrible, but wholly impossible.—*Dr Southwood Smith.*

CONSCIENCE.

In vain we look to our conscience for the knowledge of crimes; for that, as I have often urged, is but the mirror in which we see the impressions of outward objects; and a man's conscience varies with his country—it is geographical. A Hottentot's conscience dictates to him to destroy his aged father and mother, as the last act of piety. A Mahometan's allows polygamy. The consciences of the members of different sects of Christianity vary. Those of a Roman Catholic and a Quaker take different views.—*Maltravers.*

MAMMON.

Look again at another sin—our humiliating worship of wealth. Before the idol of mammon we bend with a ceaseless, degrading adoration. I know that this has been a sin in all ages, but does it not peculiarly mark this period? Even our language proclaims it. When we ask the worth of an individual, we have no reference to his moral or intellectual acquisitions, but to the amount of riches he may possess. The impression seems to be growing stronger, that the acquisition of wealth is the most important business of life, and that he is best fitted for intercourses of the world, who possesses the most sagacity in heaping it up. The consequence is, that the standard of morality has been gradually sinking to a lower ebb. In the excitement produced through our land by the acquisition of sudden fortunes, strict and stern integrity has been too often forgotten. How frequently, for instance, do we see individuals rolling in wealth, and “faring sumptuously every day,” when their unpaid creditors, whose claims the law has cancelled, are perchance suffering privation! How often do men mount up to fortune by means which draw upon them the withering scorn of all who value integrity and

right! But yet it is a melancholy fact that there is a tone of feeling prevailing through society, which induces it to call such things by soft and lenient names, and even to look with favour upon the skilful perpetrator of an equivocal act.

NO SURRENDER.

Some are in the habit of shouting “No surrender;” but I say we should all surrender; we should surrender our passions, and our prejudices, and our uncharitableness towards others. We should seek to win as much as we can from the common humanity of our adversaries. The good and the wise will pursue this course, and they will succeed; whilst the treacherous, the arrogant, and the intolerant, will dwindle far behind in the march, and will perish of self-contention, instead of coming up to win the laurels.—*Bamford.*

REVELATION.

Allowing the sometime occurrence of a revelation from God to man, how are we to obtain proof of its authenticity? A asserts that the invisible and immaterial God has appeared to him, and ordered him to demand from B and C a certain sum of money, and preference in all matters of opinion. If B and C are possessed of common sense, they will require proof of the honesty of this assertion, and also of the impossibility of deception, before they sacrifice either their reason or their property at his bidding. The first thing to be proved is the existence of this God who is said thus to interfere with their affairs. A has seen something, which he is convinced is God, because God must be an invisible spirit; but neither B nor C has seen him; and they say A is deceived, or he is lying to get our money. They will not believe him without corroborative evidence; and how is this to be procured? God does not seem to take much interest in the matter, for he will not show himself to the sceptics, and so convince their incredulity; nor is it explained why A should be favoured with visual proof, and B and C be expected to believe without it. A's only resource is the performance of miracles; but even this fails him, for B and C are satisfied, that *imposture is more probable than an infraction of the laws of the universe.*

THE CHRISTIAN CREED.

A virgin, the mother of her own Creator; God engendering with a woman, begetting himself—“which, except a man believe faithfully, he cannot be saved.”

Five hundred and fifty-seven years before Christ.—Do unto another as thou wouldst be dealt with thyself; thou only needest this law alone; it is the foundation and principle of all the rest.—*Confucius.*

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FREE-THINKERS' INFORMATION FOR THE PEOPLE.

"LET ALL HAVE FULL LIBERTY TO TEACH AND MAINTAIN WHATEVER OPINIONS THEY
MAY CHOOSE."—*Melancthon.*

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WHAT HAVE BEEN THE EFFECTS OF RELIGION?

SOME of the legislators of ancient states entertained the mischievous idea, that it was, to some extent, necessary to deceive the vulgar, in order to prevent them from running into riotous excess. This idea has not been confined solely to the ancients; for many politicians, lay and ecclesiastical, in latter times, have not scrupled to defend or practice delusion, as a means of keeping the millions in due subjection. Even individuals who have themselves penetrated the veil of mystery which hangs around the systems of error, known under the name of religion, and who have discovered the misconceptions and impostures of the sacred arcana; even some of these would impart their discoveries to only the learned few, and would allow the masses to remain in the fulness of their ignorance upon those subjects. It is notorious, and admitted by every impartial ecclesiastical historian, that the propriety of using deceit as a medicine, or as a salutary restraining influence upon mankind, was advocated and adopted by some of the most eminent fathers of the Christian church.

This must have proved a most convenient idea to priests possessed of power and affluence, anxious to retain what they already had, and to obtain much more of both. This must have been most gratifying to the feelings of tyrants, and accounts for the regard which they have ever shown, to uphold the sway of religion. The propagation of falsehood has been a profitable trade to the vendors of the commodity; who, like many other quacks, have often persuaded themselves, that their poisonous nostrums were positively beneficial to the people, who paid dearly for them. It is certainly a masterpiece of self-persuasion to bring one's mind to the conclusion, that error is better for our fellow-creatures than truth, when the latter would not answer one's avarice or ambition, and the former is made to minister to both. It is assuredly the summit of the art of working out deductions in accordance with our inclinations, to make it appear that falsehood is the true universal medicine for preventing feverish commotions in communities; and that for governors and all who profit by the subjection of the masses to do wrong is to do right.

If error be beneficial, those who have succeeded in bringing their minds to a serious conviction of this, have themselves procured a benefit. They have begun by taking the medicine themselves; and the breakings out of corruption, which it occasions, are proofs of its being unfit for the use of themselves or any one else.

But in order to make it appear that religion should be maintained, even by those who cannot discern any strength of evidence in its behalf, the utility, the happy consequences of religion should be made manifest. Before we, who have, after patient investigation, perceived the false foundations of the prevalent religious fabrics, consent to their costly continuance, we must have some proof of their advantage to the human race. Let it be shown that superstition, or religion (which is nothing but superstition in fashion), is promotive of morality, that it stays the hand of the wicked, advances the interests of society, and confers happiness to which men would otherwise be strangers, and there will then be a show of reason for our letting it alone. Establish this position, and our course will be altered. Instead of zealously striving to propagate our honestly acquired convictions, we will put a padlock upon our lips, and condemn our tongues to silence. While the hoax is being played off upon the otherwise unmanageable and wretched population, we will bow before the altar as though we inwardly revered; we will join in your ceremonies as though we believed them to be the types of realities. We will refrain from letting in light upon the mind's darkness, lest it should dazzle and bewilder the people, and induce them to break from the leadership of their proper guides, the priests. Not a word of protest should escape our lips in complaint of the immense emoluments of the clergy, for no sum could be too large a recompense for the essential services they render to the state. That the bandage had been removed from our own eyes, would be a source of regret. We would try to dim the light which has beamed upon us, and endeavour to settle once more into the comfortable delusions of faith. We would return the apple, and taste no more of the fruit from the forbidden tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

Our ingenuity would be taxed to accustom the voice to pronounce what the mind did not perceive, and to habituate ourselves to act what the heart did not feel.

All this will we do. But forget not the condition. The terms upon which alone we could consent to such a stultification of intellect and hypocrisy of manners, are—the production of unmistakable proofs of such a course being promotive of the welfare of mankind.

Upon no other grounds could we consent than that it would tend to the perpetuation of a system which prevents the retrogression of society, hinders the commission of crime, and saves things from being worse, if it cannot make them better. Bring us the experience, the reasoning, by which our judgment shall be made to approve of the effects of the faith and worship, the prayers and ceremonies of believers. Show us that these have been a source of great good which could have been supplied from no other quarter—that they are requisite now—that they will be necessary for the best interests of man in every future age—and then we will subscribe liberally to Bible and religious tract societies.

But if the conditions upon which this promise is made are not complied with—if we are enabled to refute the pretensions of Christian apologists, and virtually establish the reverse of the claims which they put forward in favour of that for which they apologise—why, then, our conduct ought to be very different from what has been just indicated. Our course ought to continue just as it has been, or if not quite so, it should be more vigorous, more determined, and more fatal to the compounds of mischief and uselessness, mistakes and frauds, the systems containing little good with a great deal of evil, to which the majority of our fellow-creatures have too long paid by far too much reverence. No fear of offending prejudices ought to deter us from speaking out boldly and fully; no attempts to obtain adherents by flattering their errors should cause us to deviate from the manful proceeding of saying what we think; no dastardly submission to the anger of the powers that be, should hinder us from crying with an earnest voice to the people, “Arouse ye from the lethargy of faith—awake, arise, or be for ever fallen.”

Neutrality upon the subject of religion appears to us quite impossible with any body of men who desire the rapid reformation of society, and who have taken a comprehensive view of the impediments to their end, and the essential means of their success. Religion is either a great evil or a great good. If it is a great good, if it is promotive of the common weal, then the reformer who leaves it out of his reckoning as one of the elements of a more prosperous condition, omits a most important subject. If it is a lever for morally and mentally elevating the human race, it follows that to refuse to have any-

thing to do with it, to say that ours is a system of morals and political economy, and that we leave forms of faith out of our consideration, is to refuse the use of powerful machinery for the attainment of our purpose, and to neglect the most appropriate method of securing what we desire. This deficiency of wisdom and want of skill in tactics, would entitle us to a very different appellation to that of Rationalists. While, on the other hand, upon the supposition that the popular creeds constitutes a great evil, that they materially injure the well-being of the population, how can we be reformers to any extent, without making efforts to destroy them? Is it because the evil is of such magnitude that some may imagine we have not power to suppress it? Why, the greater the mischief, the more reason is there for its being destroyed, and the greater the propriety of attacking it without delay. Is it because the ramifications of delusion are so widely extended, so closely interwoven, and so firmly retained in the public mind? Then, obviously, the tighter others hold by that which is detrimental to them and us, the harder ought we to pull in opposition. The correctness of this reasoning will soon be manifest to honest and reflecting minds, and when the pernicious consequences, flowing from sanctified falsehood, are traced to their source; thousands and tens of thousands will unite, and with “a long pull, a strong pull, and a pull altogether,” will bring down old orthodoxy’s edifice, which is reared upon the prostration of human dignity, and upheld at the expense of the misery of millions. Coming events cast their shadows before them. There is now a shadow from which the aiders and abettors of superstition should take a warning, and learn to desist from opposing what they cannot much longer resist. A cloud is gathering; it grows darker and darker, it frowns over the head of superstition, it settles around the dominion of faith, and will bury in eternal darkness and oblivion the empire of falsehood.

We have said that religion is either a great good or a great evil, because, as far as opinions, and institutions based upon those opinions, can operate upon the condition of society, *religious* opinions and institutions have operated. It is a thing not to be passed over slightly as a matter of no importance in temporal affairs. Not to take, either one side or the other, in the controversy between Faith and Infidelity, argues a low state of mind in those who are so indifferent. Unless they are industrious in some other department of progress, they ought to be ranked with those who prefer inglorious ease to taking part in the struggle for principle, and in whom rank selfishness predominates over every other consideration. Supposing the prevalent doctrines to be of themselves neither very beneficial, nor extensively injurious, yet, if we conceded the possibility of their intrinsic harmlessness, still, as so much time, energy, and money are expended through them,

they assume a very different aspect. If they are neither better nor worse, than as a few chips in our porridge, then as we have to pay a very high price for these flavourless chips, we ought to determine to go without them. All the time, energy, and wealth, devoted to that which is supposed to do no mischief if it does no good, might be much better appropriated for the support of measures which would certainly be as void of evil, and at the same time be prolific of immense tangible benefits.

The advocates of Christianity, or of religion in general, as opposed to scepticism, have laboured to create an impression that its effects have been of the most salutary order. Whatever of liberty we enjoy—the security with which we feel ourselves surrounded in civilized life—the opportunities presented to every individual of bringing his industry and talents into competition for wealth, station, and honour, and, indeed, all, or nearly all, the advantages of human association in the most advanced countries of the earth, are attributed to the gospel. We are assured that unless its heavenly beams had been sent from above, by the Father of the universe, we should, to this day, have been groping in the mazes of ignorance almost complete, and would never have progressed beyond the imperfect civilization of ancient states. The passions of our degenerate nature would have refused the curb, crime would have been far more abundant than it is, and disorder prevalent. We are further told that should the perversity of our dispositions be permitted to obtain the rule, none but fatal consequences can ensue. Should it please the Almighty disposer of events to wrestle no longer with the obstinacy of his creatures, and to suffer them to reject his revealed will, then when the sacred guide is withdrawn, we shall speedily be involved in ruin, and lose, not only our eternal salvation, but our terrestrial peace and prosperity. We are exhorted to be grateful for the revelation which has not simply opened up to us a scheme of redemption, and unveiled to us a portion of the joys which are in store in another and a better world for them that believe, but has been the blessed means of taming ferocity, purifying corruption, and enhancing the happiness of mankind in this world. The panegyrists of the gospel say it has been a boon for time as well as for eternity; and they insist upon declaring that it has been the main cause of modern civilization.

Now, to these statements we object. The effects so loudly boasted of have not emanated from any of the insanities of the world, known under the name of religion. The dreams of ignorance, the delusions of fancied Messiahs, the deceptions of impostors, the vagaries of fanatics, and the proceedings of bigots, though in some of these instances exhibiting no mean amount of personal perseverance and self-devotion, and though occasionally there is manifested something which may

be admired, mingled with a large amount of what ought to be unsparingly condemned, have been, on the whole, a curse to our species. It is our purpose in these remarks to show that Christianity has not been the main cause of modern civilization, but a great way from it, and that very different agencies, which it has counteracted, have advanced our race to their present position.

First, then, when we proceed to the investigation of that which is said to have been the chief instrument of progress, we shall find that from its very nature it belongs to things of the stagnant kind. Conceding it to have been useful in the way of restraint, that it has been a curb, a check, a holder still, a puller in, and not a pusher on,—suppose this, I say, for this is not the point at present disputed,—and what follows? To any one who has sense enough in his constitution to perceive the truth of the multiplication table, the inference is, that *that* which restrains is of a conservative and not of a progressive tendency. To call that the main cause of advance, the power of which is exerted to prevent a movement, and the essential quality of which is represented as of the curbing order, is just calling things by their wrong names, and making assertions of a contradictory character.

Revealed religion is necessarily fixed and immoveable. It is not like the sciences, capable of continual additions; it does not admit of the increase of new truths unfolded by experience. Our faculties of observation and reasoning are not called into activity to extend it; for this is the language addressed to us by the scriptures:—“If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book.” The theological opinions which were satisfactory to Galilean fishermen in the first century, must be the measure of philosophers’ belief to the remotest period of time. The ideas and sentiments adapted for a barbarous people, eighteen hundred years ago—and we suppose they were so adapted, or the Deity sent a misfit in those days—are to be the mind’s garments for us in the nineteenth century. We must not add to them, unless we wish to bring upon ourselves all the plagues mentioned in *the book*; and we would have been better off never to have come into existence than to do that, for the plagues of the Lord are neither trilling in number, nor easy to be borne. Here, then, is a post put up to which the human intellect is chained. If any one has curiosity and courage sufficient to break the chain, that he may roam over a wider ground than that marked out by the inspired teachers, and taste the delights of mental freedom, he is to be treated worse than a run-away slave, and be plagued with no jokes of plagues for ever after.

It is useless to reply, that the New Testament contains so pure and holy a system, a revelation so complete, rewards and punishments, and general sanctions so effective, and ideas so exalted, that

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no pitch of human improvement can advance beyond them. This pleading is of no avail. For we would retort, that if it is so immaculate, so inconceivably good, if its incentives to virtue and piety are fitted for the noblest natures and the best condition of the human race, it was not fitted for inferior conditions. The Deity must have thrown pearls before swine. Appliances suitable for one state of mind and disposition, would be too weak or too powerful for others, as they might be inferior or superior. Unless this principle be admitted, how is it that there have been an Old and a New Testament? How is it that there have been two wills of the Almighty, and Unchangeable? Why were many enactments of the old dispensation repealed upon the introduction of the new, unless the usual apology be urged, that the peculiar disposition and character of the Jewish people required peculiar laws, commandments, and sanctions? Well, then, revelations ought to be modified according to the different states of the human race. We must suppose Christianity to have been suitable for a semi-barbarous nation in the first century, unless we mean to accuse its author of being ignorant of the constitution of the minds on which he was desirous of operating. Now, if it was adapted for them, it was not so for the superior state of mankind in later times, and yet it is held up as an authority to which we should still absolutely submit. Religionists must therefore admit that its continuance beyond a limited period, must have been a clog to the wheel of progression, and a stumbling-block to improvement.

In estimating the advancing, or retarding influence of this faith, we must also refer to the churches in which it has been embodied, and ascertain whether they have proved favourable to the production of modern enlightenment. Here we are struck with the same view of things as just presented itself, with reference to the book from which the creeds of all Christian churches and congregations are said to be drawn. Creeds were framed by priests of other ages, and their efforts, and the efforts of their successors, have been directed to the perpetuation of the articles of their faith, by preventing, if possible, the intelligence of the population from getting beyond them. Religion has been chiefly influential through its ministers. If they have been the determined enemies of improvement, it follows that the faith which they teach has been a curse, instead of a blessing to the human race. And where is the individual to be found who will stand up and say that the priesthood, upon the whole, have not been a scourge and a pestilence? Where is he who will declare that they have been the promoters of liberty; that they have exerted themselves to chase away the darkness of ignorance, and diffuse the blessings of enlightenment; that they have fought for mental freedom, and used their power for the maintenance of the rights of man? Has any one

sufficient power of countenance to assert these things in opposition to the glaring historical facts which prove the contrary beyond reasonable dispute?

Far be it from us, or from the intentions of any judicious reformer, to misrepresent the character of God's vicegerents upon earth, or to speak of these spiritual brokers in terms too severe. No. There is little occasion to paint the Devil in any other than his real colours, to give one a pretty correct idea of blackness. If it is absurd "to gild refined gold, to paint the lily, and throw a perfume o'er the violet," so is it unnecessary to exaggerate the mischiefs which have been occasioned by those who have professed to deal in ghostly consolation and advice. We are prepared to admit that perhaps the majority of them in every age have been firm believers in the mysteries of their profession, and have adhered conscientiously to the tenets which they preached. Even in the palmy days of the inquisition, when the whisper of a suspicion of heresy was sufficient cause for the suspected to be dragged to one of the dungeons of the holy office, very many of those who took part in the devilish proceedings, in all likelihood, did really and honestly conceive they were discharging a sacred duty. When thumb-screws, racks, and fire were the portion of heretics, they were applied that God might be glorified, even from the lips of those who had condemned him; poignant agony and slow torture, alternated with fiendish nicety, and calculated with a view of prolonging pain, were but to prevent the unbeliever from suffering the yet more excruciating and eternal torments of hell; and the body was burned dead, that the soul might be saved alive. Of those who officiated in these dreadful transactions, many were full of hope that they were doing only what their religion required of them. Though our judgment condemns as absurd the articles of belief propounded by the priests, and though our feelings revolt from their cruelty in past ages, and even in the present day, yet let us do them the justice of saying that the greater number of them imagined themselves to be in the right. We know the power of training. Philosophy has made us acquainted with the true views of the formation of human character. There is nothing so glaringly absurd, nothing so monstrous, but it may be impressed upon the susceptibility of the infant mind, and in after years the man shall cling to it with an unconquerable tenacity. Well, then, priests, though there are many rogues among you, many whose notion for being one of your corporation is not to serve God, but themselves, not to cure souls, but to pocket cash, still do we agree that fifteen out of every twenty of you are conscientious.

But with reference to our present inquiry, this admission weighs as nothing in the balance against the position we are maintaining, viz.: that Christianity is not the main cause of modern civilization. Conscientious! Yes; so is the Thug

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when he murders the benighted traveller. so are many quacks, who pour deadly poison into the stomachs of their dupes. When the question before us is, what have been the effects of religion ? it is not enough for us to be told that those who interpret the inspired volume, and convey the heavenly message to the people, have meant well. We ask, have they done well ? and on every page of history is inscribed, in large characters—No ! no ! no !

In an examination of this important subject, it should be repeated, though it has been said a hundred times before, that religion has ever been a fog to intercept the bright rays of science, and that the priesthood have been the geni of the mist. When science rose like the morning sun to give light, life, and gladness to the dark, frost-bound, and stagnant mental world, the ministers of religion raised a shout—they cried out heresy, to frighten back the advancing orb of day. Like Macbeth's witches, "they fly by night, they fly by night." Their spells, incantations, and mysteries lose their charm when rosy morn peers o'er the distant hills. They held up their blankets, and thought they would conceal the approaching flood of light. Then it was they laid hold of Galileo, and compelled him to recant from the evidence of his senses. The aged Tuscan, by the aid of his tube, had discovered facts which laid bare the ignorance of those who penned the holy volume. It was found that inspiration had made a mistake—that infallibility had blundered. Oh ! here was a mess. And so they thought they would have the skies all to themselves, and that none others should talk about the heavens and heavenly things, because religion wouldn't bear looking at through a telescope. To this, the middle of the nineteenth century, every discovery in the real nature of things, every advance in a knowledge of the constitution of man and surrounding objects, has been first opposed, and then an endeavour has been made to pervert them into an accordance with theological fancies. Astronomy, physiology, geology, the truths unfolded in the system of socialism, have all had to make their way amidst the attacks of the ministers of religion. Some scientific men have not had the inclination to encounter the *odium theologicum*, and have thereby been hindered from stating fully the results of their studies. Thus has knowledge of inestimable value been rendered of comparatively slow progress, and much that would have been known has been lost to the human race.

In matters of education, we do but give utterance to truth, when we say that the spiritual brokers have been always hostile to the extension of secular information. When were they ever known to come forward and claim for the people the right of receiving a useful instruction ? When were they the willing channels of communicating to the masses such knowledge as they might have been possessed of ? Never. On the contrary, it

has been their desire and endeavour to hide and keep back genuine information as long as they could. In these times are they not the chief impediment to a system of national education, small as was the boon proposed ? Yes, they have all along been the promulgators of doctrines which represent the mental elevation of the masses as being dangerous to the security of states, and the immortal welfare of the toiling millions. To govern the people easily it was supposed necessary to keep them in ignorance. Give them superior intelligence, enlarge their sphere of understanding, and the result was foreseen. Doubts would break in upon their faith, a questioning spirit would be invoked, which would not be silenced till an impossibility took place, viz. the reconciliation of the popular creeds with well-developed reason. As a consequence of calling the popular mind into activity, the ultimate destruction of existing institutions, the downfall of ecclesiastical power, and an abolition of old religions was apprehended. If these things were not to be accomplished by violence, it was evident that they would be effected by a much more certain power—the moral force of an enlightened public opinion. Thus the ministers of faith have invariably taken an antagonistic position to any measures calculated to diffuse really useful knowledge. A system of national education of any service, freedom of the press, and mechanic's institutions, they have endeavoured to suppress, or to take the sole direction of them for their own purposes. When they have not dared to interpose with the view of preventing, they have refrained from giving assistance, and have looked on with dread.

It may be said by those who demur to our statements that the national schools, Sunday schools, means of cheap or free instruction to the poor, have been established and maintained chiefly through the instrumentality of the parties we are condemning. O yes ! when it was found that the people must be educated in some way or other, the priesthood took care to supply them with about the worst that could be devised. These black-coated gentry are accustomed to inveigh against the social doctrine of the formation of character and the formation of belief. But they are not so blind as to be unable to perceive and to take advantage of this truth for the continuance of their own power and the mysteries by which it is sustained. And on that account have we the Sunday schools, parochial schools, and national schools referred to.

If those who get their schooling in those institutions were never to advance beyond the instruction they there receive, it would, in the majority of instances, have been better for them to have had none at all. If they were to turn their reading to no better account in after life than the parsons and squires, who are so kind as to patronize education of that sort, would wish, they would be dolt, and worse to the end of their days. What is it

that children are taught in these places? To reason? No, for the design is to prevent that. Their memories are crammed with catechisms and creeds, incomprehensible to the most acute minds of adults, infinitely more so to children, and these they are taught to repeat, without the slightest possibility of being able to attach ideas to the words to which they give utterance, or none but the most crude and incongruous. Judgment is thus destroyed. The natural curiosity of children is smothered by this mind-murdering process. Instead of their attention being directed to the properties and qualities of real existences around them, their thoughts are carried away confusedly into the unknown regions of supernaturalism. The object is to make them submissive slaves in this world, unthinkingly obedient to kings, pastors, and masters; content to lead a life of servitude and unmitigated toil, and never to dream of interfering with matters above the station in which it has pleased Providence to place them. Children are made acquainted with the highly important, extremely edifying, and morally improving facts, that Methuselah was the oldest man, Solomon was the wisest man, Sampson was the strongest man, Goliath was the tallest man, and that David was a man after God's own heart. They learn that God Almighty put his own Son to death because he would punish some one for the wickedness of the whole human race, in allowing Eve and Adam to eat the apples that God meant to keep for himself, before any of the human race were born. Infants where they can scarcely lip their mother's name, while they are conscious of the purity of their hearts' freshness, ere they have been contaminated by contact with a priest-ridden world are forced to belie their own nature, and call themselves vile and depraved outcasts from the living God. Educational establishments! Call them mental slaughter-houses. Give them their right name, and then let the clergy have all the thanks due for being their main promoters.

That some of the clergy are themselves scientific men, that some of them are favourable to a more liberal education of the masses, and that generally they would not wish the people to become slaves in the lowest state of degradation, is not disputed. It must, however, be remembered that the advance they have made is owing to their having been pulled up to their present position by the growing spirit of the age. They have partaken in some degree of the liberality of the times in which they live. Leaders they have not been, but have been carried onward by the tide which they robustly baffeted in the opposing direction. They are not so bad as they were in former ages, because they have been obliged to concede to a power too strong for them to overwhelm. Still they are a drag, an encumbrance, to the car of improvement, and consequently they who make religion a living, and operative on the affairs of society, have not been the promoters of civilization.

In opposition to our statements and inferences, under this head, we may be asked whether such men as Knox and Luther, the covenanters in Scotland, and the nonconformists in England, have not been of essential service to the cause of mental liberty? It may be said that they were religionists, and under the influence of Christianity. Did not they give an impetus to thought, and a mighty aid to freedom, the results of which we are enjoying in these days? They boldly battled with error, and undauntedly resisted the power which was arrayed against them. Persecution could not intimidate, wealth could not bribe, but by their courageous and consistent adherence to principle, they set an example which will inspire and encourage those who enter into a conflict for their rights, till the days when there shall be no tyranny to oppress, and no slaves to be trampled on.

In replying to this, let us state that no rightly constituted individual will refuse, on account of difference of opinion, to pay honour to whom honour is due, nor will he withhold his reverence from true greatness, or his gratitude from the noble advocates of independence, because his religious views are not the same as theirs. He will not

"Ask the brave soldier who fights by his side,

In the cause of mankind, if their creeds agree?"

We therefore readily acknowledge the dignity of character displayed by the religious reformers and nonconformists of bygone times. We maintain that though, in some instances, bigotry and foolish fanaticism were exhibited, yet in the main they manifested consistency of purpose, avoided the low arts of shuffling expediency, and adhered to their conceptions of right with a firmness and a regardlessness of self-sacrifice, from which many modern reformers of the timid or self-styled conciliatory school would do well to take a lesson.

But though we admire the men, and think they fought well to establish their right of worshipping in the mode agreeable to their own consciences, and of preaching the doctrines their judgments approved, still our position in this article is unmoved, unless it can be shown that their struggling for freedom was a result of some peculiarity of Christianity, as distinguished from previously existing systems, and that the doctrines they obtained liberty to preach have worked beneficially upon the nation's mind. An attempt to prove this would be a failure. For, in ancient states, long ere the name of Christ had been heard amongst men, a love of freedom was cherished, and in behalf of that liberty which "alone can give the fleeting flower of life its sweetness and perfume," the Pagans of other days have been known to battle manfully. Even at this advanced period of the Christian epoch,

"When man would do a deed of worth,
He points to Greece, and rushes on
Where life is lost, or freedom won."

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With reference to the nature and tendency of the doctrines taught by the reformed churches, we shall presently show that they have been of a pernicious character. Religion, in its purest form, as it is known in this Protestant country, operates in the direction of injuring the judgment, and corrupting the feelings.

The truth we are maintaining is, that Christianity is very far from having been the main cause of modern civilization, and of the liberty and comforts which, to a certain extent, are derived from society. Now, in attempted refutation of this, we are referred to the Protestant reformers of the sixteenth century, and to the contenders for religious liberty at a later period. But in reply to this attempted answer to our view of the subject, let us ask, from the tyranny of whom did Luther and Knox and Calvin endeavour to set the world free? What corruption did they strive to destroy? Why, it was against the tyranny of *Christians* they fought, it was in opposition to the despotism of the *Christian Church*, which had for centuries held undisputed sway over every nation where the worship of the cross was established. The corruption they sought to abolish was the *Christianity* which alone had been influential from the time of the earlier fathers. Further, let us inquire who were the persecutors of the nonconformists and covenanters, whose conduct has been lauded for its being a bright example of manful resistance to the spiritual domination of ecclesiastical usurpers? Again, the question is met by saying, they were *Christians*, and moreover *Protestant Christians*, in whom the necessarily evil, intolerant, and persecuting nature of their faith had begun to operate strongly as soon as power came into their hands. Little thanks then to the gospel. It was the chain which fettered mankind century after century; and now we are asked to regard the chain with sentiments of approbation, because a few of its links are rusted off. And let it be borne in mind that though religious dissenters have acquired sufficient wealth to preach and pray in their own fashion, there is not yet the same liberty given to *infidels*. Orthodoxy, established and voluntary, shows its teeth, snarls, and bites at them, as bear witness the public prosecutions and private persecutions which disgrace the last few years. The contenders for religious liberty have very rarely dreamt of such a thing as infidel liberty. The Protestant reformers scouted the idea, wrote against it, and acted as they wrote, and the whining, extra-godly attenders of dissenting conventicles in these days have many of them used what power they possessed, as individuals, with more arbitrary intolerance, to crush those whom they choosed to term heretics, than was ever exhibited by the most bigoted occupier of the papal chair.

To assert that the modern progress of mankind is chiefly attributable to Christianity, is to represent opinions as being more powerful than things

in controlling the affairs of society. This is incorrect. Opinion is the product of physical circumstances acting upon the organization. Opinions, it is true, have a re-action, and do themselves become the causes, and frequently powerful ones, which control subsequent circumstances. But every great change in the condition of mankind, every advance of magnitude, moral and physical, though frequently connected with, or preceded by, a development of new sentiment, may, with the sentiments so accompanying them, be traced to physical causes more remote. That opinions, religious and otherwise, are more *modified* by than they are the *modifiers* of events occurring in the material world around us, I think will be evident to every close observer of the history of religions. Christianity has not been the same thing in any two different ages. It has not been able to maintain uniformity, notwithstanding the energetic attempts of its professors to stamp upon it a tangible permanent shape. Creeds have relaxed according to the pressure of altered circumstances, until they were finally burst asunder and completely scattered to the winds. Christianity was a religion of despotism when tyranny was considered the natural or providence-appointed order of things; it was cruel when the circumstances of nations were calculated to produce excessive cruelty; it was a warlike system, and its God was the Lord of Hosts when the times were warlike. In more democratical epochs its professors would fain have it the safeguard of their rights; and as events which this system may have checked but could not prevent, produce a spirit of liberalism, so it is made to assume a more liberal character. Thus the natural and clear deduction is, that Christianity, instead of having been the liberaliser and civiliser, has itself been liberalised and civilised by the same active agencies which have advanced the public mind. It has been liberalised and civilised, did we say? Our remark should have been, that some of its worst features have been removed, some of its sharp points have been chiselled off, and its roughnesses have been rubbed down. But let it be touched up as it may, its original uncouthness and the inherent deformity of many of its parts, will ever render it an unfit object for admiration. And when men become thoroughly civilised, they will cast it, where it ought to have been thrown long since, into the lumber cellar of things worn out and useless.

Some persons have fallen into the very great mistake of supposing Christianity to have had a favourable effect in the promotion of political liberty. Though Guizot, the celebrated French writer and statesman, advocates this opinion, it is not on that account any nearer the truth. This writer argues, that by its representing all men as equal before God—by its levelling all worldly distinctions with reference to the eternity before us—it has had a tendency to elevate the political

condition of the masses in this world. Now, whether we look at what this religion has done, or whether we view its doctrines to judge of what it was likely to do, if we can free our minds from prejudice, we shall see that it has been, and from its nature must be, the friend of despots. Whenever tyrants wanted a justification of their evil doings, the word of God, and the ministers of that word, were at hand to defend their despotical proceedings. Can it be forgotten that, until a comparatively recent period, the doctrine of the divine right of kings was deemed an indisputable portion of the teachings of the sacred volume? Can any one be ignorant of the fact that at this day, in the nations of Europe, where absolute monarchy is the form of government, the same odious principle is inferred from the Bible? Can we so far become unconscious of reality as to pass over in obliviousness the fact, that the people have, in every age, been discouraged in their efforts for political and social emancipation, by the threats of priests, the denunciations they have dealt to all who dared to murmur at or resist the regularly constituted authorities? The Bible, too, by its delineations of the character of Deity, by its narrations of his arbitrary and capricious control of the affairs of his dominion, its account of the government of the kingdom of heaven, and its precepts of unconditional submission to the powers that be, of non-resistance to rulers, though as vile as Nero, in whose reign, and with reference to whom, some of these precepts were written, does most assuredly constitute a prop and strong support to the enslavers of the millions of our race.

And, furthermore, are we borne out in the opinion now advanced, by a consideration of what orthodox Christianity tells us regarding human nature. We are all wicked at birth. We come into existence full of uncleanness, and as soon as we have breathed one breath of air we stand in need of a redeemer. All the tendencies of our being are towards evil, and away from holiness; our activity is the activity of depravity, for "man is born to evil as the sparks fly upwards." The utmost stretch of madness would be to give beings so constituted any degree of liberty. They are fitted only for a strong government, to be kept down and bound tight. To give them the privilege of acting in accordance with the dictates of their own nature, would be to let loose licentiousness, and scatter every imaginable mischief. A wise and good individual requires not to be placed under an iron dispensation, for he is a law unto himself, and the wider the sphere of his activity, the greater the distribution of benefits. It is for the evil that stringent regulations and fetters are necessary. It is proper that they should be placed under restraint, to prevent the dissemination of the wickedness that is in them. Now, religion places us all under the latter character. We are inherently wicked, and consequently freedom is not for us; and God has shown his wisdom in

appointing rulers and authorities over us, with power to act in opposition to the will of the people. Commend me not to the Bible, or to the creeds of churches, from whence to draw any arguments for pleading in behalf of prostrate humanity. All ye friends and advocates of human rights, stake not the success of your generous cause upon the unstable basis of religion, confine not your efforts to the destruction of political corruption, but aim also at that by which it is chiefly supported. Oh! if we would be really free, if we would see earth an abode of real dignity, shining with virtue, and smiling with happiness, we must despise the reproaches of friends, and the contumely of enemies, break superstition's crossier, and blot out the authority of the tyrant's text-book. Religion's flaunting red banner has waved too long over a suffering world. Now is the time for tearing down the emblem of discord, and of placing in its stead the white flag of peace and co-operation; and then every wind that blows shall convey to men a sign and a message of approaching joy hitherto unknown.

We have now fairly, and as fully as our limits would permit, shown you that the pretensions of Christian apologists, with reference to the effect of their system upon society, are without foundation in fact. The religion which ought to be something very valuable, considering the quantity of blood it has been the means of shedding, has not been the cause of modern enlightenment and civilization. To science we are mainly indebted for the superiority of man's condition in latter centuries. The revival of ancient learning gave the first impetus to thought, which afterwards dissipated the gloom of that period, which has been emphatically called the dark ages. The re-appearance of the Pagan writings of antiquity, and not the diffusion of the gospel was the commencement of the re-illumination of the human mind. Shortly after, the invention of the mariner's compass was the origination of a change, the agent of a new destiny for our species, compared with which, all the revelations in the world are powerless. Religions and creeds might set men to shed each others blood, produce commotions in states, engender cruelty in the populace, and drive nations mad with fanaticism. It might smite princes and peasants with an enthusiasm similar to that which was manifested in the crusades, but it could never have such a permanent, peaceful, and beneficial influence as that one small item in the records of science.

(To be continued.) p. 133.

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FREE-THINKERS' INFORMATION FOR THE PEOPLE.

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WHAT HAVE BEEN THE EFFECTS OF RELIGION?—*Continued.*

THE compass opened a pathway across the mighty deep, enabled the mariner to pursue his course securely through hitherto unnavigable regions. A new world was discovered, which afterwards afforded a home for the oppressed of other countries, where emigrants from native despotism sowed the seeds of liberty, which have since expanded into the tree of republicanism. As intercourse became more frequent and extended, thoughts were enlarged, ideas interchanged, and a speedy communication of discoveries and improvements took place. Commerce progressed, and with its progress occurred the decline of the feudal system. A new power arose to dispute the hitherto sole sway of a few steel clad barons. Merchants springing from the class who had been serfs, acquired opulence, and with their wealth came influence also. The middle class thus originated, have been growing in strength until they are now the most powerful body in the country, and consequently the aspect of society is entirely altered. What has the gospel had to do with effecting this mighty change? One small discovery in physical science has been of more avail in hastening us onward in the career of improvement than all the prophecies and miracles that ever amused a gaping multitude. If but one-twentieth of the effort of omnipotence required to drown pigs, and blast fig-trees, had been exerted to render men acquainted with facts which they have been left to discover by a slow experience, there would have been more reasons for thanksgiving than any priest can now supply.

The invention of the printing press was another of the more influential causes of human progress. A volume could be filled in tracing the effects of this engine of improvement. Silently it has been undermining the empire of fraud, weakening the thrones of princes, and preparing the way for a new moral state. Though the friends of superstition would gladly confine it to their service, it will not work for them alone. It is spreading far and wide a knowledge of truths, before which corruption trembles, and to which the oracles of mysticism yields no responses, but equivocations that testify the apprehensions of those who stand behind the scenes, or take part in the pageantry of

religion. Are any thanks due to Christianity for this great blessing? Certainly not; for, through its ministers, it did what it could to cast obloquy on the invention of Faust, by accusing him of dealings with the devil. Christian priests said, we must destroy the printing press, or it will destroy us. That which they disliked, however, they could not crush. But to this moment they have spared no pains to enfeeble the giant whom they could not overthrow. They have fettered the press, instigated the enactment and administration of laws to severely punish what they pleased to call blasphemy, and thus they have expended their strength to limit the usefulness of an agent, which, after all, will be the chief instrument of their entire destruction.

Without attempting so much as to allude separately to the various discoveries of science, their innumerable advantages, and the mode in which they have operated to forward mental and moral development, and physical comfort, let us but mention the application of steam to the extensive production of wealth, almost within the time of our own generation. Parsons might have preached their lungs away, Bible societies have converted every second street into warehouses for their divine books, and religious tract societies have dispersed their pages of trash as plentifully as forests scatter their leaves in autumn, with no other effect than to make men more ignorant, readier dupes of deluded fanatics and designing knaves, and farther off than ever from the happiness after which they pant like thirsty travellers for springs in a desert. But water converted into vapor and applied as a moving force, will change the state of affairs for the better, and give a brighter phasis to society. Machinery will ere long be rendered the means of diffusing abundance, with leisure to enjoy it, to the millions who now work and starve. Yes, steam will accomplish what the Holy Ghost would have failed to effect; dirty water in a boiler is of more worth than all the holy water in baptismal fonts, or in sacred vessels blessed by priests clothed in gaudy garments. Machinery lifts its arms and makes a noise for some purpose, substantial articles of utility are given as a result, which is more than can be said of the lifting of arms and the noise accompanying the exercise of prayer. The

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powers placed at the disposal of society by mechanical science will speedily give a new direction to our destiny. Old institutions and forms are unfitted for them. Now these are giving way; the competitive fabric is tottering to the base, and as it falls, as it decays, co-operation with all its attendant blessings, will rise, gather strength, and flourish.

We cannot conclude without briefly adverting to one frequent statement of Christian apologists. It is said that those countries in which Christianity is established, are in advance of the Pagan nations of antiquity, and of all cotemporaneous heathen nations. It is from this contended that we owe our superiority to the happy prevalence of the gospel. There is a degree of plausibility about this argument, which makes it sometimes successful in capturing the convictions of those to whom it is addressed. Plausibility, however, and not genuine soundness is its proper character, as is easily made clear. Think you that because two things chance to exist together, it follows one is the cause of the other? Yet such is the blunder of orthodox reasoners in the case before us. Let it be admitted that we have reached a higher pitch of morality and general well-being than did the Pagan civilized nations of old, and surely it is accounted for by our having the experience of every generation since their date to assist us, which is just so much more than they had. The world has been growing older, and if any circumstance would lead us to doubt of its having grown wiser, that circumstance is, its still retaining, in a great measure, the errors of imagination belonging to its younger years. And with reference to cotemporary heathen nations, is not our superiority attributable to our belonging to that variety of the human race possessing a higher cerebral development, to the circumstance of climate and other influences which Christianity is no more instrumental in causing, than in producing the mountains in the moon. But passing by these considerations which alone afford a sufficient refutation of the objection noticed, let us ask, what does the argument amount to? Why, it proves nothing more than that of bad things, Christianity is the best. Make the most of the idea, and it does not show that the Christian system has *not* been an impediment to improvement, all that is shown is, that it has not been so strong an obstacle to progress as other systems have been. Let religionists set aside this answer if they can; but the irrefutable nature of the reasoning is so evident, that we may safely take upon ourselves to declare that they are quite unable.

How is it that persecution has been an intimate ally of religion? How is it that the use of fire and faggot has never been deemed requisite to advance the interests of science and philosophy? There must surely be something in religion itself, tending to inflame the mind, and to excite to barbaric deeds. The truth is, that all religions have

attached merit to belief, and demerit to unbelief; they have all made the acceptance of their peculiar doctrines essential to salvation, and their rejection a crime worthy of punishment, such as gods only could devise, and devils execute. They have represented man as having a power over his own convictions; or if that has not always been a part of the system, they have in every case made infidelity an enormous offence. Though, according to some religious teachers, we have no power of ourselves to think or act aright, without being caused to do so by heavenly grace; though we cannot of our own accord obtain or receive the saving faith, yet if we have it not, we are vile sinners, worthy of all condemnation. Now, if heresy is the result of obstinacy, if men can believe upon choice, and if damnation will certainly be the punishment of heretics, how can it be shown that persecution is an evil? What is the value of a man's body, of his life in this world, compared with the inestimable value of his soul, or his immortal life; or as scripture saith, "What shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" A man is gone astray from "the truth as it is in Jesus;" he can believe if he likes; if he does not believe he is lost to eternity;—then, as others are anxious to save him, as they hope to avert the awful destiny awaiting him, they get the rack, they kindle a fire, and strive to compel him to believe. And though in that endeavour they put him to severe pain, and extinguish life itself, are they to blame, supposing the religious doctrine be true, which makes infidelity a crime? No. On that supposition, they have, in the eye of reason, done well; they have acted as friends, and have obeyed the injunction of scripture, "Go ye out, and *compel* them to come in."

One effect of religion has been to produce and foster a spirit of cruelty. The mind that has become familiarised with the horrible punishments which are believed to be justly inflicted upon lost souls in another world, is prepared to look with indifference upon the pains of mortals. Anguish beyond conception, for ever and ever! Benevolence shudders at the thought, gentleness turns pale, and humanity rises indignant, to denounce the infamous doctrine.

But religionists hear these things, and are not repulsed. They amuse themselves with writing poetry about hell; and teach their children to repent such horrible lines as these:—

"Take all the pangs that o'er the soul,
While in this lower creation, roll;
Go bear for an age the tyrant's thrall;
Take agony, keenest, deepest woe,
And heat them all to fiercest glow—
A moment of hell shall be worse than all."

That is, one moment's suffering shall exceed all that has ever been experienced by all men that have ever lived. This suffering is to endure throughout the countless ages of eternity. When

millions of years have rolled by, millions of years will have yet to come. You will wish consciousness to cease, but your wish shall be vain; you will crave for one drop of water to cool your parched tongue, and it shall be denied; you will meet with no sympathy to alleviate your torment; but "God will laugh at your calamity, and mock when your fear cometh." And this is to be the fate of the great bulk of mankind! "Oh!" men might exclaim, "why were we born, why were we brought into existence, to be thrown into a state of suffering and temptation, with so many chances that when we go hence it will be to dwell for ever in regions 'where there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth?'"

None but a being animated by measureless vindictiveness would inflict torments of this description. Yet such a being is the Deity of revealed religion. We ask, then, can those who glorify a tyrant fail in becoming impregnated with a tyrannical disposition? Can those who sing the praises of a malevolent God, and call his malice justice, avoid acquiring hard-heartedness, or cruelty?

There are some persons, shocked at the malice or cruelty which would dictate eternal punishments, and calling themselves Christians, who teach the final restoration of all. They say that punishments will be proportioned to the offences of individuals, and none of them will be so intense or so lasting as the majority of professing Christians believe. These persons pay a tribute to humanity; but for their liberality they are threatened; for their entertaining kindly feelings towards all, they are classed amongst the tormented whom they would spare. The number of these more humane believers is but few indeed, compared with the number of religionists who go the whole length in the doctrine of future retribution. They are more reasonable and more charitable than the host of the godly, but we cannot say that they are more scriptural. We must confess to the truth of a remark which we once heard fall from the lips of a Christian minister. "The Bible," said he, "declares that the worm dieth *not*, and the fire shall *not* be quenched, and that is a bold man," continued he "who, believing in the inspiration of that book, will say the worm *shall* die, and the fire *shall* be quenched." There are many texts which support the preachers of eternal punishment. "He who believeth not," says our Saviour, "shall be *damned*." In Thessalonians, we find it stated that "They shall be punished with *everlasting* destruction from the

presence of the Lord." In Luke, the following:—"The chaff shall be burnt with fire *unquenchable*." In the book of Daniel, "They shall awake to shame and *everlasting* contempt;" in John, "They shall arise to the resurrection of *damnation*;" in the 1st Corinthians, "The unrighteous shall *not* inherit the kingdom of God;" in Matthew, "Depart from me ye cursed into *everlasting* fire, prepared for the devil and his angels;" and in the book of Revelations, "The smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever." These texts could be largely multiplied; curse upon curse might be added, and by going into the Old Testament, events sanguinary and cruel could be brought forward, to illustrate the humanising, benign, and tender influence, which that book must have, from which so many of our fellow-countrymen draw their creed. Religions which connect cruel caprice and implacable revenge with the being we are called upon to admire and adore, must be dangerous and productive of pernicious effects, because men naturally imitate that which they admire.

Were it possible within our present limits to discuss this subject fully, we could, besides showing that religion has not been an extensive agent for the production of good, bring forward abundant evidence to prove that it has been a prolific source of much mischief. It has misrepresented human nature, and so prevented men from acting in accordance with the rules which knowledge points out as essential to happiness. It has by its damnatory clauses stultified the intellect, prevented free enquiry, and hindered the development of thought. Its practical effect has been to lead the mind away from things terrestrial, from measures which might have made earth a paradise, and has winged imaginations to regions unknown, far away from tangible substantial good. By its conceptions of an omnipotently tyrannical Deity, injustice has been sanctioned, vice promoted, and immorality encouraged. It has made man punishable for belief, which cursed doctrine has oftentimes set enmity between the son and the father, and the father and the son, converted earth's peaceful vallies into fields of battle, and where the glad notes of rejoicing should have been heard, the groans of captives were borne on the winds, and the cries of murdered heretics rent the air. But, rejoice! Be glad, all friends of mankind! For soon will virtue occupy the throne usurped by religion; and instead of Faith triumphing over suffering generations, happiness will bless a New Moral World.

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NEVER, in the history of this country, was scepticism so generally diffused as at the present time. Perhaps in no country, ancient or modern, has there been evidenced so prevalent and decided a disposition to throw off the shackles of faith, to discard all pretensions to revelation, and to rest upon reason alone as a means of discovering the truth, and directing human affairs. Not even excepting France, previous to the French revolution, whose Deistical and Atheistical writers obtained for it the title of Infidel France, do we think there was ever a nation, tending so much as Great Britain now is, to an entire rejection of the creeds and ceremonies of faith and worship. Formerly, scepticism was confined to the thinking few. Until the latter end of last century, or the early part of the present, doubts upon the subject of revelation were not incited amongst those classes, who, from their position in society, are called the vulgar. The thoughtful speculations of Hobbes, the polished writings of Lord Shaftesbury, the bolder works of Lord Bolingbroke, the productions of Woolston, Tindal, and Morgan, the profound reasonings of Hume, and the elegantly insinuated infidelity of Gibbon, were to be found in the libraries of the rich, and of the literary circles only. Then the masses of the people were in a state of entire subjection to the priests, and when they had obtained courage and intelligence sufficient to demand political reform, a further advance was necessary before they discovered the evils of religion. In the last century, many of the well-educated classes, to whom infidelity was chiefly confined, were not desirous of disseminating their own doubts into the minds of the people beneath them, but they rather sought to encourage the superstition of the millions. Horace Walpole was a sceptic, and most probably his doubts remained with him to the end of his days, notwithstanding the pious endeavours of Mrs Hannah More to turn his heart to the Lord, and induce him to set his affections on things above. Doubter, as he was, however, he attended church very regularly. In a letter to a friend, he states his reason for doing so. "I go to church," says he, "to induce my servants to go; a moral sermon may do them good, but I set them the example of listening, not of believing."

About forty years since, the writings of some of the French school of unbelievers had found their way into the hands of some of the more intelligent of our working population. The discussions which then took place in the associations formed for procuring Parliamentary reform, sometimes originated questions of a theological character. The justice or utility of established churches, the influence of the priesthood, and the nature of religion

itself became more frequent topics of thought and conversation. Thomas Paine, the great and the good, a man who is now only beginning to be appreciated, published his *Age of Reason*. This work, though deficient in polish, and exhibiting no great amount of research, was well calculated to effect the object for which it was designed. If its reasoning is not profound, and is sometimes fallacious, if the terms used are not always the most refined, it manifests peculiar shrewdness of mind, and abounds with strong common sense. For those who had not the opportunity, inclination, or education to pore over abstruse metaphysics, or wade through volumes of learned controversy upon historical evidence, the *Age of Reason* was eminently fitted. It is a masculine exposure of many of the errors of orthodoxy, and written in a style suited to those who could appreciate good sense, though they might lack learned lore, and be no judges of classical elegance. The book was for a long time received with horror even by the populace. Tom Paine was a name associated with every thing that was bad, the most shameful calumnies were circulated with reference to his character, and all that the priests could do, with the aid of government, to suppress his books, was resorted to. His effigy was burnt in many places throughout Great Britain. Any one professing to be a disciple of his, was regarded as a dangerous wild beast, and ran the risk of being slaughtered for a pest to society. To read the *Age of Reason*, was nothing less than to peril one's soul. Prosecutions were vigorously carried out to prevent its publication. Notwithstanding the combination of superstition, craft, and power, the book was read. Some turned over its pages, because they were honest inquirers, some because they thought there must be truth in a volume which had been so bitterly denounced by the friends of corruption, and others from those motives of curiosity, which induce many people to get a sight of anything particularly atrocious, and would prompt them to visit the devil, if his sable majesty had a residence on earth.

The publication of this book was followed by a wider dissemination of infidel literature, than had ever taken place in any former age. An under current of scepticism ran through a large portion of the press, and periodicals openly attacking superstition were freely circulated. The books which had hitherto been confined to the learned few, were brought within the reach of the masses, who were now better fitted for appreciating them, owing to the taste for superior reading which had been generated.

Lastly came the body of men known under the name of Socialists. These established themselves

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into a society, with a regular legislative and executive, with branches and ramifications throughout Great Britain, with missionaries and publications to extend a knowledge of their principles. Their system is not one of mere negative infidelity. They propose not only to destroy, but to build up. Their design is to propagate a true estimate of human nature, and to base society on right principles, so that poverty and vice should be banished from the world, and goodness and joy be the inheritance of all future generations. Though the destruction of false theology is not their main object, yet, as the truths they promulgate, are at variance with the popular creeds, and superstition is a great hinderance to the reforms they are anxious to introduce, they find themselves under the necessity of engaging in theological controversies, and combating the errors of religion. This they are doing with great success. Their progress is viewed with fearful apprehensions by all who are interested in the maintenance of the old opinions. Their opponents have tried every plan to impede their onward march, but all have failed. Persecution and prosecutions, slander and misrepresentation, loud abuse, and silent machinations have been resorted to in turns, while the memorable prediction of the venerable founder of the rational system is being singularly fulfilled, that "silence will not retard its progress, and opposition will give increased celerity to its movements."

What a change has the last half century witnessed. The altar and the throne were the magic words, at which the mob tossed their bonnets in the air, and shouted for king and country. The parson's dictum was undisputed; wherever he went he was received with tokens of reverence, and people touched their hats as he passed. But now it is a term of reproach, an epithet of ridicule, conveying the idea of avarice and hypocrisy. No longer have the clergy the influence which at no distant period they possessed, when their commands were invariably followed by obedience, and the individual, or the book that they denounced, were avoided by the people with horror.

During the time this change has been going forward amongst the humbler classes of the community, scepticism has been making inroads amongst the literary and higher ranks of society. Undoubtedly, those who revel in luxury, drawn from the slavery and toil of the millions, whose substance is the poor man's ruin, and whose idleness is supported on the prostration of the dignity and happiness of humanity,—doubtless these, and their hangers-on, find a very useful ally in religion, and will support it as long as they can, because it is no trifling means of supporting them in their unjust position and ill-acquired possessions. But men of science and literature, the aristocracy of nature, before whom the aristocracy and lordlings of royalty's creation sink into insignificance, soar far above the superstitions adapted to the mental capacity of old women, suited to

the trading interests of shopkeepers, or "the simpering creatures of the counter and the till;" and satisfactory enough to the imbecility of the effeminate worshippers of fashion, or the butterflies of a court. The orthodox lament, and not without cause, the scepticism of the majority of scientific men, or their indifference to the things treated of in the so-called book of revelation. In those instances, where men of acknowledged eminence in physical science strive hard to reconcile the facts discovered by their investigation with the whimsies of theology, they are not so successful in preserving orthodoxy as in convincing men of the facts which lead to inferences, directly the reverse of priestly teachings. In addition to the breaking down of confidence in religion, amongst the best informed in physic and science, the *literati* of Europe are deriving scepticism from the profound writers of Germany. Even those metaphysicians of that nation of thinkers, who have dealt most in mysticism and spiritualism, have had a tendency to lead men's minds away from the ordinary creeds, and have often been at variance with them. But the German writers of the rationalist school are doing much more to shake old orthodoxy's edifice. Some of them explain away all that is miraculous and supernatural in connection with the Old and New Testaments, while others, such as Strauss, in his last work, do not shrink from propounding Atheistical arguments.

Seeing, then, that Infidelity is making rapid strides in this country, and on the Continent, that the learned and the unlearned are throwing aside belief in, and reverence for, the system known as Christianity, in its various modifications, it becomes a very important topic of inquiry to ascertain what are likely to be the effects of prevalent infidelity. Are we to hail and encourage the revolution which is taking place in the theological opinions of the people as the harbinger of a superior state of society, and of an acquisition of happiness to the human race, or are we to try to arrest the advancing tide, from a just apprehension of its being calculated to sweep down the bulwarks of peace and order?

The clergy and the apologists of religion have predicted the greatest evils. Infidelity, they say, is adopted from the worst motives. Its advocates have thrown off the restraints of the gospel, because they dislike to be curbed by precepts of morality, and wish to indulge in vice, and all uncleanness, without the fear of retribution in a future life. A general deterioration of the character of our race, and the frequency of deeds of atrocity, are said to be the sure consequences of loosening the faith of mankind in the word of God.

Now, we look upon these lamentations, and bemoaning prophecies, as being nothing better than the vain fears of credulity, the misapprehensions of ignorance, or the artful misrepresentations of a body of men who conceive their craft to be in danger. So far are we from pleading guilty to

the charge of being actuated by improper motives in embracing and defending scepticism, that we glory in the name of Infidel. So little do we apprehend of evil, and so much do we expect of good from the abolition of religion, that we are proud of the epithet which has been put upon us as a word of reproach. For our part, we have little sympathy with those who, while they doubt, are almost afraid to let themselves know it; and must call their infidelity by some such title as "primitive Christianity," or "genuine religion," at the time that there is no more of one or the other in them than in the exhausted receiver of an air pump. To infidelity, as implying unbelief, we for one hasten to lay our claim, and do not wait for its being fastened upon us by our opponents as a crime. To infidelity, as implying moral unfaithfulness, a deficiency of attachment to truth, or a cowardly desertion of principle, in order to disguise ourselves beneath the mask of hypocrisy, for the sake of some pecuniary or inferior interest, we plead most firmly, not guilty. We expect that no permanent mischief and that much ultimate good will arise from unbelief, and therefore do we unhesitatingly avow ourselves to be heretical, and wish that many of those who pretend to be above the common superstition, would have courage to express their thoughts, and not play into the hands of the common enemy, by saying, "It is best to leave religion alone."

It is our intention on the present occasion to show, first, that prevalent infidelity would not be inimical to refinement and elevation of mind; secondly, that it would not deprive men of any substantial source of consolation in seasons of sorrow, nor at the hour of death; and thirdly, that it would not diminish virtue nor promote vice, but that it would forward the interests of morality and happiness.

Under the first head, we are called upon to notice the statements of those who defend religion upon the plea of its presenting images of beauty and grandeur to the contemplation of mankind, of its bringing us into relationship with a being of perfection, and a sphere of existence far, far more glorious than anything we can observe in the material universe around us. There are individuals attached to religion, because it appeals to their feelings, and gives scope to the excursive flights of their fancy. It opens up regions, concerning which nothing is known, and of which, therefore, anything may be conceived which flatters the passions, pleases the imagination, or panders to the tastes of its devotees. The poor fanatic, who has not sufficient intellect or strength of purpose to gratify his ambition, by obtaining power over mortals, and whose highest attainment is the ability to rant evangelical phrasology by the half-hour, to a gaping crowd more ignorant than himself, thinks of crowns and principalities in the world to come, and waits in expectation of an exalted place in the kingdom

above. The indolent sentimentalist, who is too lazy to exert his energies for an investigation of science, or to inquire for truths which cannot be obtained without laborious search, relieves his mental vacancy by giving way to the rhapsodies of supernatural concerns, and yields abundantly to faith, to avoid the trouble of thinking. Take away religion, and it is said we deprive existence of its poetry. Every thing will then assume a dull, cold, utilitarian aspect. Angels, and archangels, cherubim and seraphim, brightness and glory, the pure, the immaterial, and the refined, the joyful mansions of eternity, "where the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest;" the abodes of woe, thought of with painful interest, where the great chief of sin holds in everlasting punishment those whom justice has visited with retribution, the regions where shrieks ever rend the air, and where the sulphurous fire gives "not light, but darkness visible;"—these conceptions of the terrific, the sublime, and the beautiful, are all crushed beneath the dead lump of materialism. Thence it is argued that scepticism would narrow our thoughts, and tend to degrade human nature by depriving us of the great and magnificent objects of contemplation which are afforded by religion. "There is always," says a Christian author, "something ennobling in the idea of our connection with a being of infinite power, wisdom, and holiness."

But in reply, let us ask, what is the connection in which we stand to this great being? Is our situation with reference to him one of honour and dignity to ourselves? No; according to the religion of this country, our relation to him is a very poor one, that is, we are poor relations, and have to cringe, fawn, and flatter, to get day by day our daily bread. If popular theology be true, our connection with the King of kings is not honourable to ourselves, for we are in the condition of condemned criminals, whose only chance of reprieve is from the mercy of the majesty whose laws we have necessarily disobeyed, on account of the very corruption of our nature. We are everything that is bad by constitution, and being full of sin and uncleanness, are repulsive to the Lord of purity and goodness. 'Tis ours to crave for forgiveness, to throw ourselves at the footstool of the Most High, with a full sense of our worthlessness, and of the inefficiency of good works, and to call ourselves worms of the dust, outcasts, and chiefs of sinners. There is assuredly required a larger amount of ingenuity than most of us are possessed of, to discover the exalting, ennobling, and dignifying tendency of conceptions of this description. Instead of teaching us to think well of human nature, and to aspire after a state of society in which men's actions shall ever manifest goodness, these ideas tend to discourage our efforts for a better state of things, and reconcile us to a world of misery and degradation.

Let our confidence in tales of supernaturalism

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be removed, and there would remain in the moral manifestations of human beings, and in the physical universe, amply sufficient to feed the mind with the sublime and beautiful. Dr Chalmers observes that, "even in the desolate region of Atheism, the eye of the sentimentalist might expatiate among beautiful and interesting spectacles—amiable mothers shedding their graceful tears over the tomb of departed infancy: heightened integrity maintaining itself unsullied amid the allurements of corruption; benevolence plying its labours of usefulness; and patriotism earning its proud reward in the testimony of an approving people. Here, then, you would have compassion, and natural affection, and justice, and public spirit." The eloquent doctor here speaks truly. If all relating to heaven and to deity were cut off from our belief, human life would not be deprived of its poetry, nor would the face of nature be despoiled of its beauty, nor the universe lose its grandeur.

And be it observed, too, that inasmuch as we can only form ideas of objects which are tangible to our senses, all our conceptions of spiritual beings whom we have never beheld, and of the regions which eye hath not seen, must have been derived from a transposition or combination of ideas derived from the world in which we live. Our ideas of the good, and the beautiful, and the sublime, therefore, have not their origin in supernaturalism, but are transferred by imagination from nature, to supposed existences beyond. The material world, and the evolutions of human feeling and conduct, are the source of all our ideas; even of those which appear the farthest removed from their real origin. It clearly follows that the destruction of religion would not leave us destitute of magnificent, or of bright and pleasing images, and that from nature might yet be drawn subjects of thought to elevate and refine. On reference to facts, we do not observe that sceptics have been deficient of generous warmth of feeling, or that there has been a lack of poetical fire amongst them. They have, at any rate, been as susceptible as orthodox believers, to impressions from whatever is noble and charming. They have experienced emotions vivid and ecstatic, when gazing upon the starry heavens, or contemplating the boundlessness of the universe, or reflecting upon the nature of man; moving amidst the fairer scenes of nature, or roaming among wilder sights where storms play around the cloud-capp'd mountains, and the roaring of cataracts emulates the thunder of the heavens. Sceptics are not made of the cold insensible stuff which makes up the constitution of those who must be stimulated with an account of the torments of Tophet, before a sentiment can be awakened within them; and can then listen without indignation to orthodoxy's cruel narration.

Strange, indeed, it is, that Christianity should implore protection from the destroying hand, on

the plea of its fairness and beauty. Here let us quote the eloquent language of Robert Dale Owen upon the subject. "If I adopted the opinion," says he, "that the pleasing imaginings of religion should be retained and approved, because they are pleasing, even though they be imaginings only, I would not choose the Christian religion, with its grave and unadorned ceremonial, and its abstract doctrines, and its long homilies. If we look to religion as the poetry of life, let us have the glowing mythology of Greece at once. Let us again people the mountains with Oreads, and the grove with Dryads. At every fountain let a young and beautiful Naiad lean over her magic urn. Let us clothe the gods with human frailties and passions, that we may feel for and with them. Let them be moved to pity and warmed to love. Let us re-establish the court on Mount Ida, in all its classic magnificence. Let the venerable father of the gods assume his throne by the side of his stately queen. Let the majestic Apollo be there, and Venus in her heavenly beauty, and Pallas in her peerless wisdom. Install Iris again as the ærial messenger; and let the graceful Ganymede approach, and tender the nectar goblet. Banish all our cold, dull sermons, and overthrow our great brick churches, and let us again have the temple of marble, with its gorgeous rites and splendid paintings, and its

'Statues but known from shapes of earth,
By being too lovely for mortal birth.'

"Give us incense-breathing altars, in groves sacred to the graces and muses. Give us the song and the dance, and the quaint festival. Tell us not of a ball of fire revolving on its own axis, nor of a satellite shining with reflected light; but let the God of day once more yoke his golden steed, and the gentle Diana descend to her sleeping Eudymion."

"That was a religion of poetry, and of beauty, and of rich imaginings; and if it be these we seek, let us have it once more. Tell us not that scepticism is cold and heartless, because it dissipates a few day-dreams about the prophet of Nazareth and his virgin mother. How bright and glorious compared with these were the dreams that Christianity dispersed."

2nd. Infidelity would not take away from men any substantial fount of consolation in seasons of sorrow, or at the hour of death. In a former lecture, we have shown that Christianity is not the cause of modern civilization, but that it has been in many instances an impediment to the improvement of society; and we shall endeavour, in a subsequent part of this discourse, to establish the beneficial tendencies of scepticism, in hastening onward the progress of social reform. If religion is the cause of many woes, if it originates or maintains false principles, if it is the stay and support of institutions which engender vice and misery, (which we think may be made abundantly

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evident,) then little do we owe to it, even supposing it to contain within itself a balm to partially heal the sores which it has in the first place caused. There are truths, in accordance with which the arrangements of men should be organized. When that is done, poverty will disappear from the face of the earth, nature's bounty will be alike open to all, the wail of starving thousands will not rend the air, but sounds of joy will be heard on every side; health will bloom on every countenance; virtue will preside over human affairs; the way of man will be the way of pleasantness, and all his paths be peace. But the principles which are to conduct to these happy results, are opposed and counteracted by the doctrines of supernaturalism. The common creeds constitute the chief barrier to their reception, and practical application amongst mankind. Shall that which feeds corruption be praised, because it may chance occasionally to strike the monster whose life it sustains? Shall we conduct the robber to seats of honour, and build monuments to his memory, because, when he has taken our possessions from us, he throws us back a small portion of the spoil? Assuredly, if we did these things, we should be the greatest dolts imaginable, and were responsibility a correct rule of conduct, we should deserve to be robbed for our stupidity. Then, granting that now and then a case occurs, in which some poor wretch, destitute of this world's gear, struggling day after day with all the horrors of poverty, finds some alleviation of the horrors of his hard lot, by occasionally withdrawing his mind from earthly things to think of the riches of the celestial kingdom, the joys of everlasting life, which will be bestowed upon all the faithful, without money, without price, and without distinction of persons; granting that instances of this kind do sometimes occur, religion, after all, is only the dispenser of a taste of honey to a few of those whom it compels to swallow large draughts of gall. It prevents us from removing human misery, and then claims our encomiums for diminishing it in a slight degree. It is only as a plaster to the skulls it cracks, a word of comfort to the hearts it breaks.

In the next place, be it observed, that religion, from its very nature, is ill calculated to supply comfort in those situations and emergencies in which it is most required. It relates to scenes and events beyond our knowledge, to a life beyond the grave, a condition of existence inconceivably different from our present mode of living, and, therefore, unless our ideas of Deity, and of heaven, are gross and earthly, they cannot, in most people, constitute a counterbalance of joy to the distresses which arise from realities. Mere abstractions are but a poor juxta-position to a misery-producing combination of things. I speak now of a religion, with which those who entertain it have connected something like reason and judgment; for I am aware that the feelings of a fanatic will sometimes render him insensible to want and danger, and

will carry him through fire and water unhurt. But it is no more possible than it is desirable to make all the world fanatical. The religion which alone can be impressed upon the great majority, is not capable of counteracting effectually the pains which arise from untoward events in this world. The stoical philosophy, though it pretends to secure its disciples from the sufferings incident to humanity, is of little practical value, because men are so constituted that they cannot be all indifference; and so, though religion pretends to be a soother and a comforter, inasmuch as it directs men to lift themselves above the affairs of time, and to dwell in thought upon another and a better world, to merge the troubles of our earthly career, into the delight of contemplating the blessings of an eternal happy home, it is not capable of realising its pretensions, because, despite of theory, man will look upon this world as his home, and the beings amongst whom he lives and moves, and the objects of time and space, are those upon which his affections and interests will mainly rest. When things go smoothly, and our minds are undisturbed with domestic care, pleasure may be derived from pursuing the speculations of theology. There is much satisfaction in dwelling upon abstractions, and winging our imaginations to dominions beyond our ken, when there is nothing to perturb us in our affairs. But when the pressure of sorrow comes, our wings are broken, the pinions of fancy are dropped, and we look for relief in quarters nearer to the place of our calamity. A merchant who has spent a life of unremitting industry, observed the strictest economy in all his outlay, denied himself many of the pleasures of life, and been ever constant to his occupation, that he might obtain a competence for his old age, and leave his family in a station of respectability, by some unlucky speculation, or the occurrence of some event which no prudence could have foreseen, is suddenly plunged into ruin. All his hopes are thus blighted after years of incessant toil. From a state of comfort, those who are nearest and dearest to him, are thrown into destitution, and must go out to buffet with a selfish world. Could religion replenish his coffers, repay him for his labour, educate his children, and save them from want, it would restore peace to his troubled breast. These things it cannot do, and all that he gets is some very impracticable advice about "laying up your treasure where moth cannot corrupt, nor thieves break in and steal." Unfortunately, that kind of treasure is not a recognised coin of the realm, it is not a legal tender, and, consequently, it will not save us from the distresses of poverty.

(To be continued.) p. 141.

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FREE-THINKERS' INFORMATION FOR THE PEOPLE.

"LET ALL HAVE FULL LIBERTY TO TEACH AND MAINTAIN WHATEVER OPINIONS THEY
MAY CHOOSE."—*Melancthon.*

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WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECTS OF PREVALENT INFIDELITY?—*Continued.*

A WORKING man craves to become the slave of another for a paltry pittance, which shall scarcely sustain life in himself and family, and even the boon of this degradation is denied him by a system of society, which our cold-hearted political economists tell us, "works very well." He has still sufficient self-respect to delay becoming a pauper. His furniture, his clothes, all that his prudence has stored up for sickness and old age is gone, and at last he is forced to beg something from the hand of charity. He possibly receives enough to lengthen out starvation, and

"Dies so slowly,
That none call it murder."

And pious ladies, who, for want of something better to do, have formed themselves into "tract distributing," and "district visiting associations," call upon him to talk about the bread of life, the consolations of religion, and the duty of contentment, and to leave him a bible and religious tract. A bible under such circumstances! Divine grace and short commons! Salvation and starvation! Oh! what a mockery of distress, what a burlesque of consolation.

Yet, further, if, for the sake of argument, it were admitted, that extremely religious persons can draw from faith much comfort in periods of adversity, we maintain that the destruction of that faith would be of little consequence, because in a nation, and amongst the classes where there is much misery, the people will *not* be religious. The circumstances of misery will cause indifference to religion. So, supposing it had the power of alleviating distress, we are led to inquire, inasmuch as it cannot be generally present where it is most wanted, of what use is it, and what should we lose by its annihilation? The sum total of the value of the thing destroyed might be represented by a line of cyphers as long as you please.

When an individual is absorbed in some favourite pursuit, or his interest permanently excited in some object of contemplation, if he is enabled to retain these, the casualties of life, which vex other people, and even poverty, are regarded by him with little care. On this account, a saint, or

one whose chief delight has been in the performance of worship, and reflection upon the subject of his faith, will look upon vicissitudes of fortune with considerable indifference. We have known a very pious farmer, whose chief enjoyment and delight for many years was the preaching to a small congregation, of which he was the unpaid pastor. He had little interest in making money, but he took a great deal of interest in discharging the duties of his voluntary ministry. When the crops failed, and the neighbouring cultivators of the soil were much chagrined, he met the disappointments with remarkable coolness, because he rested his happiness upon the religious offices which he had undertaken. This much we will freely admit. But circumstances of this kind are not peculiar to any faith. The same would hold true of any of the innumerable creeds which divide the human race. And not only are such effects found to result from creeds in connection with the gods, and another sphere of existence, but from any pursuit or study, in which individuals find much pleasure. If these, the chief sources of their enjoyment, be retained, the loss of other things will be comparatively little felt. Enthusiasm in any cause, whether it be religion or philosophy, will produce something approaching to apathy with reference to the affairs to which the individuals are much less attached. The poet, wrapt in his own thoughts, and borne aloft on the wings of imagination, lives in a world of his own creation, a world of splendour and beauty, though he may be penning his inspirations in a Grub Street garret, obscure and neglected. How often has the man of science and the philosopher toiled on in poverty, borne up against contempt and malice, and pursued the noiseless tenor of their way, with no other source of consolation than the delights derived from the studies to which they were devoted. And in humble life, often has the cot of a poor man been cheered by the rays of philosophy. From books, superior far to the trash called religious reading, he has gathered thoughts which expand his mind, and warm his heart, and make him feel the greatness of his nature, notwithstanding his lowly station. In contemplations entirely apart from the perplexities of

theology, he has found an agreeable relaxation from his daily toil, and a soothing comfort in times of distress. Here, then, if religion be banished, and if it were worth (which it is not), all, in this respect, that its eulogists contend for—here is a substitute. Let creeds never again receive the confidence of mankind, and philosophy will appear instead to cheer us in adversity, to remove the evils which faith maintains, and to confer benefits which faith could never bestow.

To present religion to us as something peculiarly adapted for strewing the path of life with flowers, and making our pilgrimage through the world one of interest and delight, is either an iniquitous deception or a gross delusion. As we have it in this, the most advanced country on the face of the earth, it is a thing of terror—not of joy. It speaks to us of many being called and few chosen. It tells us of the wide gate through which numbers pass to destruction, and of the narrow entrance leading to life eternal, which is passed by a comparative fraction only. To the rich man it says, that a camel may easier pass through the eye of a needle, than such a one enter the kingdom of heaven. To the poor it promises no reward, except they have such qualities as it is scarcely possible they can have, amid the temptations of their situation. To all, it mentions traps innumerable, and machinations many, to ensnare our footsteps, to lead us into the ways of sin, and thence to everlasting destruction. We have our own nature prone to evil, sin alluring us under the disguise of pleasure, and Satan and his tribe ever ready to catch us in an unguarded moment. With all these powers to contend against, all these chances against our salvation, how shall we wonder at the harrassing anxieties of those who are seriously impressed relative to the things of another world. Well may those who have reflected upon the difference between everlasting happiness and everlasting pain be filled with dread lest they should not be among the fortunate few for whom the bliss of heaven is reserved. The immaterial bonds of faith are weak as flax before a flame to control those of warm passions and impetuous desires, while they twine around the heart, and corrode the pleasures of those who are of mild and timid dispositions, and need no restraint. The susceptible natures of tender hearted and inoffensive females are played upon by fanatical ruffians and designing priests, and they who would not injure a fly are tormented for life with alternate fits of enthusiasm and dejection. An affectionate mother loses an infant child by the hand of death, and the grief of separation is augmented by her fears for its eternal welfare. She has no certainty that her lost one was of the elect—a vessel chosen for grace. What can transcend the impudence and imposture of those priests, who, unable to defend their system upon the grounds of evidence, tell us of its consolatory nature, and, with hypocritical whine,

ask us, “not to rob the people of the comforting assurances of the gospel.”

Many of the foregoing remarks are applicable to the influence of infidelity at the hour of death. It is often said that religion may do to live with in health and prosperity, but that it will fail us at the hour of dissolution. Christianity smooths our passage to the tomb, and triumphantly exclaims, “O grave! where is thy victory? O death! where is thy sting?” So say the opponents of infidelity.

That martyrs for the cross have been sustained by their enthusiastic faith, when the fire was curling round their limbs, or when they were undergoing a lingering death by instruments of torture, is indisputable. A disregard of pain and death is, however, not peculiar to the followers of the cross. A Hindoo woman will calmly consign herself alive to the grave of her departed husband. The soldier seeks “the bubble reputation e’en at the cannon’s mouth.” Thousands are to be found in this country who will hire themselves as human butchers, and embrace almost a certainty of being themselves slaughtered, for a shilling and a pot of beer. An Irishman will run the chance of getting his head broke, for the fun of the thing, and for the sake of a row. The patriot, animated by high and noble impulses, altogether apart from theological considerations, will shed his blood for liberty, and die with hand upraised against his country’s oppressor. Any strong feeling or passion, good or bad, and fanaticism amongst the rest, will lead men to brave danger, suffering, and death, in behalf of the object which arouses their efforts. When infidelity becomes prevalent, a cowardly fear of the time when the world must be left for our last long sleep will not ensue; and there will remain all the warm feelings and strong impulses which are necessary to excite actions of bravery and prowess.

But, to speak of quieter dissolutions and death-bed scenes, we may remark that Christianity has made more hard death-beds than was ever known before. This is a fact which all who have thought upon this subject will admit. The exclamation, “O grave! where is thy victory? O death! where is thy sting?” implies a boast inconsistent with truth. The pagans and infidels of antiquity had less dread of departing this life than the Christians of our own day. Religion, and especially Christianity, has invested the last moments of human existence with an awful mystery, and rendered them a horrible condition of suspense between this world and eternal joy, or never-ending woe. And as for the assertion that infidelity will not do to die with, its falsehood may very easily be proved by a reference to the departures of hundreds of sceptics annually. They leave sublimary scenes and events as calmly as the orthodox; and oftentimes the death-pillow of the heretic is smoother than that of the evangelical believer who was constantly calling upon him to

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think of his latter end. When men shall be tained rationally, and taught to live in accordance with the laws of their constitution, youth and manhood will be healthy, and old age vigorous; and, when the hour of their departure comes, no superstitious fears will harrow their feelings, but, quietly, the sleep of death will come upon them. Thus, what nature gave, she will painlessly take away.

3d. In the third place, we were to show that infidelity would not be injurious to virtue, and that it would be promotive of morality and happiness. The advocates of orthodoxy have strenuously exerted themselves to create a general impression that religion and morality are inseparably connected, or, at any rate, that if we destroy the former, the latter must soon disappear. They speak of the promised rewards and threatened punishments of their system as being absolutely necessary to hold the unruly inclinations of mankind in subjection. "In those conjunctions," says the Rev. Robert Hall, in his eloquent, though abusive and fallacious book, on *Modern Infidelity*,—"in those conjunctions, which tempt avarice, or inflame ambition; when a crime flatters with the prospect of impunity, and the certainty of an immense advantage, what is to restrain an atheist from its commission? * * * * * The dread of punishment, or infamy, from his fellow-creatures, will be an ineffectual barrier; because crimes are only committed under such circumstances as suggest the hope of concealment: not to say that crimes themselves will soon lose their infamy and horror, under the influence of that system which destroys the sanctity of virtue, by converting it into a low calculation of worldly interest."

It would appear, from the representations of the defenders of religion, that things in this lower sphere had been so imperfectly arranged as to render a career of vice consistent with the greatest enjoyment, if men's views were confined solely to the present life. It is the tendency of much of the preaching characterised as evangelical to create such an impression,—one which must be detrimental to the growth of morality. But to all actions there are attached certain natural consequences, from which there is no escaping, and these decide the character of the actions. Does a person yield himself to dissipation and sensuality? Short-lived and unsatisfactory are the pleasures which he obtains from the misuse of his faculties, and, ere long, his mind falls a wreck, and his body becomes a prey to disease. The selfish man not only loses the delights of benevolence, the exalted pleasure experienced in lessening the pains and increasing the joys of his fellow-creatures, but inevitably he is shunned by mankind, continual suspicion and distrust disturb his repose, and all that he is enabled to accumulate is incapable of affording him happiness, because his avarice is but inflamed by what it feeds upon. Does an in-

dividual neglect the cultivation of good temper, and place no curb upon the violence of his anger? In the heat of a moment he is driven to the commission of deeds, which embitter his feelings to the end of his days. Does any one nourish an undue craving for power, and seek to obtain the objects of his ambition, regardless of the means used to accomplish the end? He will be surrounded by enemies, his days will be passed in restlessness and inquietude, and the insatiable cravings of his ambition will be as an inward devouring worm. So might we proceed to show the inevitable consequences of misery which must result to the individual who takes his departure from the ways of virtue, and turns a deaf ear to the dictates of duty. There are sanctions of morality in nature, more certain and convincing than any which can be derived from books which relate to affairs above the clouds or beneath the ground. The vicious man cannot be happy, though in ordinary language we were to say that his evil doings were successful. Surround him with wealth and splendour, let a sceptre be placed in his hand, let none impede the gratification of his passions, and these will only decorate the misery of a splendid wretch. To one whose crime had thus gained its ends, and whose career of iniquity had been carried on with impunity, we might address ourselves in the language of the poet.—

—"Look to thy wretched self!

Ay, art thou not the veriest slave that e'er
Crawled on the loathing earth? Are not thy days
Days of unsatisfying listlessness?
Dost thou not cry, ere night's long rack is o'er,
When will the morning come? Is not thy youth
A vain and feverish dream of sensualism?
Thy manhood blighted with unripe disease?
Are not thy views of unregretted death
Drear, comfortless, and horrible? Thy mind,
Is it not morbid as thy nerveless frame,
Incapable of judgment, hope, or love?"

From the natural effects of an immoral course of conduct we cannot free ourselves by any prayers, or professions of faith. We cannot transfer the consequences of our own sin upon a redeemer, one in whom we have only to believe to get clear at once of all the iniquity that was in us. Nature knows nothing of such a mediator—whereas, with reference to religions, though men may have practised every species of villainy, and have been guilty of unparalleled atrocities, if they repent a short time previous to dissolution, and acknowledge an atonement of blood, they shall, when their souls quit their tabernacles of clay, be heralded into the celestial kingdom with every token of rejoicing, and every mark of honour. Now, produce a general impression that crime may often be more conducive to enjoyment in this life than an adherence to goodness, and, at the same time, preach the efficiency of repentance, even at the last hour, for the salvation of sinners,

and then let any candid person ask of his own judgment whether such teachings can be favourable to the production of good conduct. In this way, then, religion, as it is generally taught, is not an aid to morality, but a serious incumbrance; it is not a supporter, but a deadly foe, whose hostility is the more dangerous because it is masked under the appearance of friendliness. The sceptic banishes the superstitions of ignorance, and bases morality upon a knowledge of the relations subsisting between man and man and external things. He learns that misery is necessarily attendant upon guilt, and he accords with the maxim which says—

“ Know thou this truth, enough for man to know,
That virtue alone is happiness below.”

Having within him an instinctive desire for happiness, and an aversion to pain, he adopts the conduct which will secure the one and avoid the other.

Those who entertain the doctrine of natural depravity, may conceive that every manifestation of goodness in mankind, is the result of influences sent from another sphere, and never the spontaneous production of our nature; but those whom the creeds of ignorance or imposture have not blinded, will perceive that in the human constitution there are the holy feelings of benevolence, affection, and sympathy. These will show themselves, despite of all the circumstances which men, in their ignorance, have accumulated to suppress them. Even the wild denizen of the forest, and the rude inhabitant of the desert, will perform offices of kindness for a fellow-being in distress; and at a sight of woe, tears bedim the eyes of those who were never trained to acts of gentle courtesy. Amidst the selfish influences of competitive institutions, where each is forced into a species of warfare against each, where one man's elevation is scarcely to be attained, except at the expense of another's degradation, there is much of benevolence and gratitude, which inspire the hopes of the social reformer, and give a brightness to his anticipations of that which man will become, when society shall be arranged on the principles of mutual assistance, instead of rivalry. Or if we go to those in whom every spark of noble feeling would seem to have been extinguished, and whose characters we might, at a hasty glance, conceive to be all blackness, we shall still find some evidences of relenting, and of a disposition to be better than the circumstances surrounding them had permitted them to be,

“ The darkest night that shrouds the sky,
Of beauty hath a share;
The blackest heart hath signs to tell,
That good still lingers there.”

But we are not indebted to religion for the sympathies and affections which are inherent to the human constitution. These will always yield the

fruit of kindly action, they will prompt to the performance of good deeds, independent of calculations of personal interest, whether with reference to the events of life, or to expectations of reward in a state of existence beyond the grave. Abundantly will these holy impulses incite men to assist the afflicted, enhance the joys of the prosperous, and aid each other in the promotion of general happiness, when the system of society, which religion is mainly instrumental in supporting, shall be superseded by the co-operative arrangements friendly to benevolence, and which infidels will be the chief agents in establishing. As the good impulses of our being, here referred to, have not their origin in religion, prevalent infidelity will not be the means of taking them away.

When we are asked, “ If scepticism were generally received, what there would be to restrain men from the commission of crime, when it flattered with the prospect of impunity?” It seems to be inferred that we should be content with the mere destruction of faith, without taking any measures to secure the well-being of society. Such an assumption is absurd and erroneous. Just as preposterous would it be to complain of the demolition of an old and incommensurable habitation, and to descant upon the inconveniences of being shelterless, while the complainers take no notice of the superior erection which the demolishers of the old erection had prepared. Sceptics would not be indifferent to the establishment of those securities which are essential to the preservation of order, and the extinction of crime. ~~Take away religion,~~ and how will the dominion of vice be circumscribed, and what will stay the hand of the wicked? is a question which we answer, by referring to the institutions and arrangements proposed by the Social Reformers, who, with very few, if any, exceptions, are heretical in religion. Man is the creature of habit, and it is possible to impress individuals during the years of infancy and childhood, with habits of virtue which will adhere to them till the last day of existence. Numerous are the instances, even in old society, in which men prefer poverty and persecution, with truth and honesty, to the ill-gotten gains of guilt, or the popularity derivable from pandering to the follies and vices of the powerful, and the prejudices of a mob. In most of these cases, the sustaining power is not the bible faith, but the consciousness of rectitude, the delight of knowing that they are not traitors to truth and goodness, though fallen among evil days. This delicacy of conscience, this love of virtue for its own sake, may be developed and nourished in all, by a judicious system of training, such as would be adopted, in not a religious, but a rational state of society. Furthermore, the arrangements could be adopted to render it the apparent, as well as the real interest of each to do only that which is lawful and right. Temptation would be removed, or where it might chance to present itself unavoidably, it would be

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successfully resisted by the moral strength which would be imparted to all. Crime might flatter with impunity from artificial punishment, but what inducement for the commission of wrong would that be to those who had no inclination or motive to crime, and who were aware of its natural and necessary results ? These are the kind of restraints which sceptics would impose ; such is a brief idea of the measures they would take for the repression of vice, and the promotion of virtue—restraints more efficacious far than the conceits of the framers of creeds, measures, the salutary effects of which upon the commonweal, would be so great, that if church extension were carried to the length of converting every third house into a place of public worship, and every third man into a priest, the latter, comparatively, would accomplish nothing in the cause of virtue ; to say nothing of the probability of such an increase of churches being attended with an increase of crime.

It has been a part of the plans of the priesthood, and their allies, to represent infidelity as inseparably connected with immorality. They have either, from design or ignorance, circulated the most unfounded calumnies, respecting those who have had enough of honesty and mental independence to throw off allegiance to them and their systems. Individuals of sceptical principles, if walking uprightly, are slandered, while persons with flagrantly bad characters are at once assumed to entertain sceptical notions. Infidels, who are moral, are accused of immorality, and vicious persons, who are not infidels, are alleged to have embraced infidelity. To rebut the assertion of the supporters of faith, nothing further would be necessary than to refer to the conduct of those who have shaken off the popular creeds, if we had candid opponents to deal with. Let a fair and unprejudiced comparison be made between the disciples of scepticism and the orthodox, and the decision would be favourable to the unbelievers. Do they become worse sons, husbands, fathers, or members of society, because of their unbelief ? No. In many instances, we have known individuals, who, when escaped from the creeds taught first by their nurses, and afterwards by the priest, seemed to be relieved from a load which had hitherto pressed upon their hearts and minds, and then to devote themselves with a new-born energy to the duties of life. Frequently a thorough reformation of character has been produced by the development of thought arising from the introduction of the new views. As for the indifferent, those who, immersed in schemes of selfishness, or hurrying on in the vortex of dissipation, seldom think of religion, except occasionally, when they make up their minds to repent at some future day, and by and bye to lead a godly life, who imagine that they are in little danger of losing salvation, because they never questioned the Bible, nor doubted the parson's word—all persons of this character we disown. They belong not to

us, for they are believers. Many of this description commit acts of dishonesty, and plunge into the grossest sensualism, without compunction, who would be quite shocked at perusing one of our infidel essays.

Religion, as a restraining instrument for the prevention of crime, has failed. Notwithstanding its fire and brimstone, and demons, an experience of eighteen hundred years has abundantly proved that Christianity is insufficient to secure the bappiness and morality of mankind. Religion has been often made to subserve the passions of wicked men, but it is little calculated to thwart or control the impetuous desires of those whose ways are evil. Other means must be resorted to, in preference to faith, for rendering mankind what they should be. For, are not those who flagrantly violate the plainest dictates of justice, and revel in the vilest abominations, found to be believers in Heaven and Hell, an awful day of judgment, and all the terrors of supernaturalism ? Are not those who suffer on the gallows, for offences which make us blush for humanity, generally individuals who would have shuddered to have disputed a word of the Bible ? The boasted restraints of faith are weakness itself. If religion were destroyed, scarcely a perceptible check upon crime would be removed, while an obstacle to the introduction of a system, prolific of goodness, would be dispersed.

In conclusion, let sceptics bear in mind that the reformation of society, and the propagation of truth, will not be effected so much by railing at the faults and errors of others as by amending our own. We are attached to principles which we are confident will work well for the interests of the human race. Let us give some evidence of this in our own conduct. Let us show to the world that, sceptics though we are, we can faithfully discharge the duties of our station, and, in our domestic or more public relations, exhibit an irreproachable character. When foes malign us, let us live down their calumnies. If our conduct be thus consistent, and enthusiasm be joined to our discretion, the falsehood against which we contend must become extinct. We have only to be true to ourselves, to accomplish the noble purpose which we have in view.

‘ For truth ! simple truth, shall flourish and prevail,
When all the arts of fraud and falsehood fail ;
And come it will, the day decreed by fates,
(How my heart triumphs, while my tongue relates)
The day, when religion's power must bend,
Must see its fortunes fail, its glories end.
When prophet, priest, and prince, shall reign no more,
Nor cross, nor crescent reek with human gore ;
But over all triumphant truth shall rise,
And virtue be great reason's sacrifice.”

ON THE EXISTENCE OF DEITY.

THE first step in orthodox theological science, must, of course, be to prove the existence of a Deity possessing attributes of intelligence and benevolence. Here, on the very threshold of the inquiry, at the very foundation of the system which is to prescribe religious duties to man, an insuperable difficulty presents itself. It is not possible to prove the existence of the Being, whose relations to us are said to give rise to duties towards him. What sort of fabric must that be without a foundation-stone, of what value is the science which is deficient—nay, totally incapable of proof for even its most elementary propositions? Such is the science of Natural Theology. It has yet failed to make good the point upon which the whole of it hangs.

Most assuredly, the propounders of this science have discovered what they imagine to be demonstration for their leading principle; and, from the confidence with which they put forward their arguments, it requires some little boldness to entertain a suspicion of their being wrong. However, we will endeavour to point out the insufficiency of their reasonings, to make evident the existence of an intelligent Deity. Of course, we only take the natural theological grounds; and believers in the bible can yet fall back upon that in support of theism, as they are obliged to do for evidence of the immortality of the soul.

Well, let us look abroad on the face of nature, let us walk in the fields, take note of the simplest blade of grass, and observe the smallest insect which crawls upon its green leaf. Insignificant as they are in the universe, how far beyond the reach of art, how far the construction of those minute objects transcends the wisdom and skill of human contrivance. Let us, at night, look upon the starry heavens, and while we gaze upon suns and worlds, thrown together in apparent confusion, let us remember that all is order there, that each planet revolves in its proper orbit, that each of the interminable series of systems, the immensity of which overwhelms the conception of mortals, retains its place, so that the mighty whole exists in harmony, and can we, for a moment, suppose that these are the effects of chance, can we doubt the superintendence of an all-wise Providence?

“What though in solemn silence, all
Move round this dark terrestrial ball;
What though no real voice nor sound,
Amidst their radiant orbs be found,
In reason's ear they all rejoice,
And utter forth a glorious voice;
For ever singing as they shine,
The hand that made us is divine.”

By declamations of this kind is it tried to carry

our convictions captive, and obtain our assent to the theological dogma of the existence of an intelligent creator, and ruler of the universe. We are not insensible to the beauties and sublimities of nature,—we would rather walk through a flower-garden, while the fresh and gentle breeze sported with the many tinted foilage, wafting sweet fragrance to the sense, than move in ball-rooms amidst the rustlings of costly garments, the sparkling of diamonds, and the scent of artificial perfumes. With rapture we gaze upon the fairer scenes of nature, and with awe—with the indescribable feeling of the sublime, we stand by the mountain-side, or by the thundering waterfall—

“The solemn organ's peal
Wakes not my soul to zeal,
Like the wild music of the wind-swept grove.
The gorgeous altar, and the mystic vest,
Rouse not such ardour in my breast,
As when the noontide beam,
Flash'd from the broken stream,
Quick vibrates on the dazzled sight;
Or, when the cloud-suspended rain
Sweeps in shadows o'er the plain;
Or, when, reclining on the cliff's huge height,
I mark the billows burst in silver light.”

But we see not the inscription, we hear not the voice which proclaims, “the hand that made us is divine.”

Gladly would we penetrate the secrets of nature, and unravel the mysteries of the universe—but we do not fancy that, by using a name, by giving a title to the unknown, we increase our knowledge. We ask, whence came man—by what agency was he originally produced—whence came the innumerable worlds which traverse the immensity of space—were they called into being by the fiat of an omnipotent creator, or is nature eternal,—ever changing in its parts, but eternal, everlasting in its wholeness? These are questions prompted by the inherent curiosity of the human constitution. We would like to know the why and the wherefore of the existences and phenomena around us; but there are many things upon which nature is a dumb oracle; and, however willingly we would become her pupil, these are matters concerning which she withholds instruction.

It is said that chance could not so have disposed of the particles of matter as to have produced the surprising structures, in which there is intricacy without confusion, and beauty combined with utility. Now, this statement, or assertion, we can most cordially assent to, without perceiving that it carries with it any corollary, proving the existence of an intelligent Deity. We as strenuously maintain the impossibility of chance

being sufficient to account for things as we observe them, as the most positive theist,—and, for this reason, that there is not, and cannot be, any such thing as chance. The existence of matter being granted, its possession of properties and qualities is implied, and, consequently, in accordance with these it must act, whatever they are. The properties and qualities of matter are its powers and susceptibilities—and it is evident that it can only act as it has the power, or be acted upon as it has the susceptibility. Thus, then, regular and constant modes of operation, or, to use the common phraseology, the laws of nature are implied in the very existence of matter. Chance, as a directing principle, is impossible, because no effect can be produced without a cause, and where there is causation or necessity, chance is *not*. The causes of phenomena may be concealed from us, we may be unable to trace them through the intricacies of their windings, to grasp them in their vastness, or descend with them in their minuteness, but we cannot suppose their operation to cease, because of our inability to follow.

We will now take notice of the argument from design. There is, we are told, an evident arrangement of the materials of the universe, with a view to the production of certain ends;—parts are adapted to each other with such precision as to work harmoniously for the accomplishment of particular purposes. This, we are further informed, is design; and with all the assurance of a certainty of triumph, we are asked—how can there be a design without a designer?

To this interrogation, we of course say it is impossible; there can be no design without a designer. But let not the natural theologian flatter himself that he has made out his case. Before proceeding to lay open the fallacy of this mode of reasoning, allow us to remind the reader that there have been two species of arguments resorted to by theologians to prove the existence of Deity—namely, the argument *a priori*, and the argument *a posteriori*. The former is given up by nearly all the theologians of the present day—its inadequacy for the case is admitted—and, therefore, we have not brought it forward here for the purpose of refutation; and we take no notice of the profound reasonings of Dr Samuel Clarke, since they have been demolished by the orthodox themselves. The argument, *a posteriori*, or reasoning from effect to cause, looking through nature up to nature's God, is the method adopted by modern reasoners upon the subject. But this argument also, in the instance before us, is defective. You tell me that there is design in nature, and therefore there must be a designer. The inference certainly follows, if the data be admitted; but we dispute the premises, and call upon you for evidence in their favour, before we go along with you in your conclusion. You first assume that the phenomena of the visible world are designs—a clear assumption—yet the whole

question hinges thereon, and must fall, unless the assumption be substantiated. Now you have no other means of satisfying us that they are designs, than by previously proving the existence of a designer; but that you are not in a condition to do, inasmuch as you bring the thing which itself wants, proving, as proof of that which must be admitted, before the validity of its proof can be conceded. This is reasoning in a circle—and though the number of eminent men who have involved themselves in this error were tripled—though we might intensely desire to avoid the scepticism in which the selection places us—though all the pains and penalties of rampant persecution here, and punishment the most horrible in another sphere of existence, were threatened for our heterodoxy—yet we could not erase our perception of the fallaciousness of this argument.

Let us revert to the old illustration of the watch—which is, indeed, as good an illustration of the analogical arguments of the natural theologians as they can adduce. It is put in this way:—"If an individual were walking in an uninhabited island, and were to find a watch, he would at once make up his mind that human beings had at some time or other been there—and he would be convinced of that, because intelligence and contrivance are requisite to put together wheels, levers, and other apparatus, in such a way as that they shall, with hands and a dial, indicate the hours of the day." Then look, say the natural theologians, at the mechanism of the human body, what machine made by man exhibits such surpassing adaptation of part to part,—the eye more perfect in its arrangement of lens, and its relation to optical principles, than the most finished telescope, made by scientific opticians,—the ear so well adapted to catch and transmit sounds,—in short, every organ so constructed as to discharge, when healthy, in the most efficient manner, its proper function? Why should we, when we see a watch or a telescope, make no scruple of attributing its origin to an intelligent being, and yet hesitate to acknowledge the agency of intelligence, in the production of the complicated and superior mechanism of the human frame?

My answer to this is, that the analogy is not sufficiently complete to warrant us in subscribing to the doctrine sought to be established by it. We know that a watch, or a telescope, is made by man, because not one instance has yet come to our knowledge of unconscious objects, or of inferior animals, manufacturing either of these articles. We never met with chronometers growing on gooseberry bushes, nor eye-glasses borne by plum-trees. We ascribe the manufacture of a watch to a human being, because we have seen men making them.—If we had not had that experience, or testimony to that effect, it would have been impossible for us to have known how the article had come into existence. We should, probably, like the savage,

who saw a watch for the first time, suppose it to be an animal, and the ticking of its works to be its voice, or the beating of its heart. And here a ray of light is admitted, which exposes the sophistry of the analogical argument. We have seen tables made, and experience tells us that nature does not produce them ready made, therefore, when we see a table we are convinced that man has been its maker; but, in the name of candour, let us ask of the theologians, where, in this respect, is the analogy between a watch, a telescope, or a table, and animals, vegetables, or worlds? What mortal has ever seen a world manufactory? We presume that not even the most orthodox of natural theologians has been privileged to enter the Almighty's laboratory, to witness the incomprehensible—the more than incomprehensible—the contradictory process of bringing suns, stars, and satellites out of nothing. Away then goes the peg upon which the theories of religionists—the freaks of fanaticism—the ceremonies of superstition, and the milder errors of a pretended science are suspended.

Harmony is not a real, but only a relative existence, it is a relation subsisting between objects. What is harmony to one being, may be confusion, discord to another, because that other, being differently constituted, would be differently affected by similar circumstances. No being could be brought into existence, and continue, unless surrounding objects harmonized sufficiently with its constitution, to permit its existence, so that whatever might have been the properties and qualities of matter, however widely the laws of nature might have differed from what they are at present, the beings produced by their operation, must have harmonised with external things, or they could not have existed. Thus, to account for the harmonic relations of existences, we are not compelled to give up materialism, or to suppose the action of an all-wise intelligence.

Indeed, when we look into nature, we find what may be termed discord, as well as what is called concord. We find the struggle of opposing powers, of attraction and repulsion, of motion in one direction, against motion in another direction, of light and darkness, of life and death. The fact that our bodies, after reaching maturity will decay, and life itself be extinguished, shows that nature is concordant to us only during the few fleeting years of life. Observe that where, in the opposition of powers, one gains the ascendancy, the others must be subservient to it; and therein is harmony, or such a relation between circumstances and an object, as permits that object to be. Grant but the existence of matter with properties, (and no one can disprove the eternal existence of matter,) and harmony necessarily follows.

We have sometimes heard it said, "If nature is an efficient cause for the origination of animals and vegetables, how is it that we never see any originated now except from living parents? Since,

in our whole experience, the generation of life has not been known to take place except from parents, is it not reasonable," says the theist, "to infer that nature possesses no such power?" This may be briefly answered, by retorting the objection upon theism, and that we may do in the same words, with the alteration of two terms only,—“If there be a Deity, who is an efficient cause for the origination of animals and vegetables, how is it that we never see any originated now except from living parents? Since, in our whole experience, the generation of life has not been known to take place except from parents, is it not reasonable,” say we, “to infer that there is no Deity possessing any such power?” The objection pulls with equal force in both directions, and so neutralizes itself.

Little, indeed, is the knowledge of the profoundest philosopher, compared with the infinity within and the infinity without—the range of discovery is boundless—we know not what were nature's powers in the distance of the past, what they will be in the remoteness of the future, what they are now in regions beyond our ken; and shall man, an ephemeral atom upon this, which is as a grain of sand in the universe—shall man presume to set limits to nature's capabilities.

It can be shown that it is only an infinite universe which can be evidence of an Infinite Deity, but if the universe were infinite, it would exclude all but itself. We could point out the possibility of there being something far superior to intelligence, attributes of which we can form no more conception, than a man born blind can conceive of colour—it could also be proved that, admitting the manifestation of design in the phenomena of nature, we could not tell whether or not there were more Gods than one, because unity of design in a work only testifies to unity of counsels, and not that one personality alone was the maker—these and other branches of the subject, we will touch upon in a future number.

In concluding, for the present, let a hope be expressed, that while we engage our minds in these speculative topics, we shall not be forgetful of the attractions of virtue, nor suppose that the pursuit of truth is a mere mental recreation, having no reference to practice. Good works are better than faith—morality is better than fine-spun theories, and we should always be actuated by a desire to enhance the cause of morality and happiness, in our endeavours to demolish superstition, and to cut off error from its hold on the people.

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ON THE CHARACTER, VIEWS, AND DOCTRINES OF CHRIST.*

THE histories which have come down to us of the life of Christ are scanty, and, in all probability, much mixed with fable, and with the ideas of latter times; yet, still they present to us a character so peculiar, and so strongly marked, as to force upon us the impression that it was a real one. The attentive perusal of the four gospels, leaves, then, the conviction that Jesus really lived; and, farther, that there was in him a combination of traits, which do not frequently meet in the same individual, the result being a character, which has few or no parallels in history. It has often been said, that this singularity of character does itself afford an evidence of the divinity of his mission. But the inference is unwarrantable, unless it can be proved, that the character contains something necessarily superhuman. Whereas, it may, perhaps, be shown that each feature of it is resolvable into the operation of feelings and powers common, more or less, to all men, influenced by the circumstances in which he was placed. The superhuman character and offices attributed to Jesus, have generally prevented Christians from examining this question freely; any other language than that of pauegyric or homage, has been deemed by them as unsuitable and irreverent, and a kind of halo has thus been thrown around the founder of Christianity, which has contributed to the difficulty of seeing him in his natural aspect. Let us be on our guard, no less against the overstrained admiration of his followers, than against the attacks of his opponents, and endeavour to pierce through all that confuses and dazzles the sight, in order to get a distinct view of the carpenter's son of Nazareth.

1st. *Jesus seems to have been an enthusiast.* This was not an unnatural effect of the study of the Jewish Scriptures. He had heard or read from his infancy the history and prophetic writings of his country, which, from their sacred associations, their antiquity, their record of miraculous interpositions, their claim to divine inspiration, and their wild imagery, were of a nature most im-

pressive to the imagination. The prophetic writings were especially of this character, their real origin and meaning were imperfectly known, the people considered them, and the scribes pretended to consider them as divine oracles. From the time of the Maccabees, the prophets, as well as the law, had been established in popular veneration, and to question the authority of either, was equivalent to denying the national creed, and forsaking the first principles of religion. Such scepticism never entered the minds of the religiously educated Jews like Jesus. He, therefore, read the books of Daniel, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Micah, Zechariah, and Malachi, not as interesting poetic remains, but as oracles of great and pressing import, as foretelling fearful signs and wonders, and mighty revolutions to be accomplished in the latter times. One principal topic of these books is the general perfection and happiness of the world at some distant age. This subject has interested the feelings, and exercised the imagination of many men in all countries; but, in the books in question, it was combined with other topics peculiarly animating to the Jews; viz., that the chosen people were to be the instruments of God for bringing about the world to the true worship, and that, in the new era, the throne of Israel would be restored by a second David, and all former monarchies surpassed by the splendour of the kingdom of the saints of heaven, and of God. That such a belief, sanctioned by all the authority of their national religion, should have been highly exciting to the Jews under a foreign yoke, is less surprising than they should have remained unmoved by it. By dwelling long upon a favourite project, the mind easily acquires the belief, that it has a secret mission to fulfil it; and thus, Jesus, from contemplating the kingdom of God, was led to believe himself the predestined king. This idea of his own mission, was confirmed by the power which he found his preaching to possess over the multitude, and the apparent success of his compliance with their petitions to expel demons.

Such an enthusiasm was by no means irrational in one situated like Jesus. On the contrary, admitting the inspiration of the prophets, the strictest reasoner must allow that the views of Jesus

* This article is abridged from "Hennel's Inquiry concerning the Origin of Christianity," an elaborate and original work.

were well grounded; and then it becomes merely a sign of mental vigour that he acted according to them.

It may be said, that such enthusiasm would have given way at the prospect of suffering and death. But this is not evident. Under the character of Prophet and Messiah, Jesus had traversed Galilee, and attached to himself many followers. His belief in his divine mission had been confirmed by the elevation conceded to him by those around him, and that which at first was enthusiasm, became a settled principle of action. Besides, to men of a high tone of character, intent upon great objects, and especially, like Jesus, believing in the immortality of the soul, the prospect of death has much less terror than an inglorious retreat. Considering the position arrived at by Jesus, when Herod was about to arrest him, we should be prepared to see a more surprising phenomena in a sudden renunciation of his claims, and a retirement into disgraceful obscurity, than in his actual proceeding to Jerusalem at the risk of his life. On approaching the city, and on perceiving that still the kingdom of heaven did not appear, that no sufficient human or divine aid was near to effect the regeneration which he had hoped to bring to Israel, he began to look upon his fate as inevitable, and, as it approached nearer, prepared to meet it with a dignity becoming the character he had assumed. Enthusiasm is to a certain degree flexible, and Jesus being forced to see the hopelessness of the immediate coming of the Messiah's kingdom, adapted his views to the progress of events, and taught that the Messiah must suffer before he should reign. To his associates he was still the Messiah; he promised them hereafter the kingdom which it was plain they would not obtain immediately, and to the last maintained and believed that he was the SON of MAN predicted by the prophets, who was to come on the clouds of heaven, to introduce the kingdom of the saints Dan. vii. v. 13, 14.

2d. *Jesus was a revolutionist.* He expected to be king of the Jews, and to restore the kingdom of Israel. This appears from his lamentation over Jerusalem, Matt. xxiii. 37. "How often would I have gathered thy children together, and ye would not!" From his selecting the number twelve for his apostles, in agreement with the number of the tribes, and of seventy for the disciples, who went to proclaim, in imitation of the Jewish Sanhedrim, from his twelve thrones to his disciples, and from his assuming the titles, *Son of David, Messiah, King of Israel, and King of the Jews.* The latter was the office of the Messiah most dwelt upon in the prophets, and most currently attributed to him in popular opinion. All this confirms the truth of part, at least, of the accusation brought against him, viz. "He stirreth up the people, teaching throughout all Jewry, beginning from Galilee to this place, saying, that he himself is Christ, a king," Luke xxiii. 2. 5. "And Pilate asked him,

saying, art thou King of the Jews? And he answered him and said, Thou sayest it." This admission of Jesus himself, together with the notoriety of the fact, induced Pilate to inscribe on the cross, "This is the King of the Jews." Now, it is evident the title "King of the Jews," was understood in its obvious and literal sense by the Jewish populace, and also that this sense was included in the character attributed by the prophets to the Messiah. Since Jesus, in assuming the title, and during the whole of his career, allowed it to be understood in its current acceptance; it is very improbable that he himself should have taken it in a sense so unthought of, as a mere spiritual king. It seems likely that he expected a popular movement to follow the beginning of his preaching in Galilee, for the main purport of it was to urge the people to prepare for the kingdom of heaven, and for a sign of adherence, he required his converts to follow him.—Matt. iv. 19. 25; viii. 22; ix. 9; x. 38. This agrees with the account of Josephus, (Ant. xx. 7.) that men pretending to divine inspiration, induced the multitude to follow them into the wilderness, pretending that God would show them signals of liberty or deliverance. Such solemn warnings of the approach of the kingdom, as Jesus delivered to whole towns and provinces, imply that he intended more than merely to require preparation for the reception of purer moral and spiritual doctrines. If he had intended only this, he would surely have refrained from using language, which, in the existing temper of the nation, was so likely to be mistaken for a promise of national deliverance. The appearance of other pretenders of this kind, made it the more necessary to distinguish his mission carefully from theirs, if it were in reality intended to be of a totally different character.

The injunctions given so frequently to follow him, agree with the accusation, "he stirreth up the people," and indicate that Jesus expected the coming of some extraordinary event, such as a national regeneration, which would interfere with the common routine of life, and which was so near at hand, that men, in order to prepare for it, must forsake their occupations, kindred, and all that they had, not looking back even to perform the most pressing ordinary duties. "And another of his disciples said unto him, Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my father. But Jesus said unto him, follow me, and let the dead bury their dead."—Matt. viii. 21, 22. "And another also said, Lord, I will follow thee, but let me first go bid them farewell, which are at home in my house. And Jesus said unto him. No man having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of heaven."—Luke, ix. 61, 62. "If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell all that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven, and come and follow me."—Matt. xix. 21. "Every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters,

ON THE CHARACTER, VIEWS, AND DOCTRINES OF CHRIST.

or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name's sake, shall receive an hundred fold, and shall inherit everlasting life."—Matt. xix. 29. "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me."—Matt. xvi. 24. This interruption of the common business of life was quite unnecessary for the introduction of a purer creed of religion and morals. This end might have been effected simply by preaching at each town or synagogue, hearers being exhorted, as they were by Paul in after times, to continue in the vocation wherewith they had been called. What could Jesus do with crowds of followers, and what motive could he have for encouraging an excitement which must bring so much inconvenience and hazard upon himself, unless he really expected that some extraordinary change in the state of the nation was about to take place?

The exhortations to follow him are too frequent and too general, to allow us to suppose, that they were intended only for select disciples. Multitudes did follow him, and evidently with his permission and sanction.—Matt. ix. 36; xii. 32; xix. 2. But after they had accompanied him for some time, he occasionally found it necessary, from fatigue, or from a sense of inconvenience, to avoid them, or to send them away. The expectations of the kingdom was not sufficient to maintain crowds in the deserts; and in the absence or delay of signs from heaven, they must, of necessity, be dismissed.—Matt. xiii. 36; xiv. 22.

After he had preached through most of the cities of Galilee, he began to upbraid Chorazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum, because they repented not; and, according to Matthew, it was *at that time* that he uttered the prayer, "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes."—Matt. xi. 25. Since he had been preaching to these cities to prepare for the kingdom of God, and since, in the case of individuals, he required some sign of adherence to himself, such as a profession of faith, or following him, it seems probable that, by the repentance which he required of the towns, he meant not only the expression of contrition, but a recognition of his authority, and some public demonstration of preparation for the kingdom which he was about to introduce. This would account for the repulsive conduct of the towns of Galilee. The allusion to the ignorance of the "wise and prudent," in the prayer immediately following, seems to be a proof directed against the men of influence and authority in these towns, for their rejection of him. It was quite natural that the magistrates of synagogues, Pharisees, and other persons of weight, on whom rested the responsibility of preserving order in the province, should share the feelings of the priests at Jerusalem, and in latter times, of Josephus, and be anxious to curb, rather than encourage, the inclination of the

multitude, to look for sudden political innovations and changes, whether to be brought about by human or superhuman means. Jesus coming amongst them, with the warning that the kingdom was nigh at hand, resembled too nearly Judas the Galilean, and later innovators, to be looked upon otherwise than with coldness and suspicion; and these pressing political considerations made the chief men in each town, with a few exceptions, overlook that which was superior and more innoxious in the claims of Jesus—the character of moral teacher and prophet. That which is of least interest to us—the political aspect of the proceedings of Jesus—was to them, necessarily, of most urgent importance.

There is a passage in Luke, somewhat at variance with this view of the expectations of Jesus. "And when he was demanded of the Pharisees, when the kingdom of God should come, he answered them, and said, The kingdom of God cometh not with observation. Neither shall they say to here! or lo there! for, behold, the kingdom of God is within (or among) you."—Luke, xvii. 20, 21. But this passage occurs as the introduction to a discourse which alludes very plainly to the siege of Jerusalem, and seems, therefore, to be one of those which we must regard as expressing more the views of the writer's own time, than of those of Jesus. By the time of the siege of Jerusalem, it had been seen that the kingdom which Jesus had announced as nigh at hand, had not come with that open display which was at first expected; and it was therefore supposed to consist in the gradual and noiseless spread of his doctrine and church.

If, however, the passage just quoted seem to render it doubtful whether Jesus himself expected some approaching national change, when he preached throughout the country that the kingdom of God was nigh,—where can we find evidence more decisive than the testimony of the disciples, who had heard Jesus himself, and, consequently, were better able to judge what his meaning was, than readers, who are obliged to gather it from a number of interpolated fragments? Now, Luke says, that when they approached Jerusalem, the disciples "thought that the kingdom of God should immediately appear."—xix. 11. That their idea of a national deliverance is proved by the speech attributed to Cleopas, "We trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel," and that supposed to be spoken by the apostles at the ascension, "Lord, wilt thou at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?" It is a violent and unwarranted hypothesis to suppose that the constant attendants upon Jesus had grossly misunderstood him concerning the chief subject of his preaching—one, too, on which they themselves had been sent out to preach. We must, therefore, conclude, that, up to the time of his arrival at Jerusalem, he had authorised them to expect, and did himself expect,

in the kingdom of God an approaching national deliverance. Although it thus appears that Jesus included a national deliverance in his idea of the kingdom of heaven, and that he endeavoured to bring the whole people into a state of excitement, which was to be the precursor of some important political changes, it does not follow, of necessity, that he reckoned on attaining this end by means of an armed rebellion against the Romans. The key to his conduct seems to be, that he relied principally on the divine intervention promised by the prophets. When we reflect that these were daily read as oracles of undoubted truth, and that many passages in them clearly encouraged such an idea, we need not be surprised that it was taken up even by some minds of a superior caste.

Jesus then followed the rest of his countrymen, in believing that one part of the office of the Messiah was to restore the throne of Israel; but the character of prophet and teacher seems to have agreed better with his temper and habits of thought. The poetical imagery and inspiring strains of the prophets, more than the desire of political power, awakened his enthusiasm to the quest of the visionary kingdom, and he found a more congenial employment in dilating on its sublime prospects, than in entering into those political intrigues and daring enterprises which form the qualification of ordinary revolutionists. The assumption of the Messiahship necessarily led him to the adoption of views partly political; but his apparent disposition to content himself with merely delivering exhortations, warnings, and precepts, so long as he was allowed to do so unmolested, seems to indicate, that the character of a moral and intellectual leader was more natural to him; and it might be an impression of this kind which contributed, after his death, to the disciples' ready abandonment of political projects, and to their adoption, in later times, of the doctrine that his kingdom was not of this world.

3d. *Jesus was a Reformer.* He opposed the dogmas of the scribes and Pharisees, disregarded their interlopations of the laws and traditions, and set the example of appealing freely to the mind's natural and independent dictates. He relieved benevolence and good sense from the pressure of established authorities, and taught that religion consists in the internal purity of the thoughts, and in the practice of morality, rather than in the performance of rites and ceremonies.

But the full extent of the reform which the Christian sect introduced into Judaism does not appear to have been attempted,—it is doubtful, if it was contemplated even by Jesus himself. He observed the ritual law of Moses, frequently gave his sanction to it, and we cannot discover that he ever authorised its disuse. After his death, his followers appear for a considerable time to have had no idea of forsaking the Mosaic institutes; inasmuch, that the first proposal to dis-

pense with them nearly created a schism, and appeared to the heads of the church a case so novel, that it required a special council to decide upon it.

This view of the conduct of Jesus, with respect to the laws of Moses, agrees with the silence of Josephus concerning him, when lamenting the disuse of the ancient Jewish rites.—*Antiq. xviii. ehap. 1.* If he had considered Jesus as the prime mover in this bold innovation, he could hardly have avoided alluding to him in this place, especially as the disuse of the law, amongst the greater part of the Christian sect, when Josephus wrote, pointed Jesus out to his particular notice. But he accuses Judas, the Galilean, of having caused the change in the customs of their fathers, by introducing a new system of philosophy, and thus tacitly exonerates Jesus. The innovation of his predecessor and countryman, Judas, renders the conservatism of Jesus, in respect to the law of Moses, the more remarkable.

Hence the great merit of Jesus, as a reformer, consists rather in the general liberal and enlightened tone of his teaching, which contributed to prepare the way for the changes introduced afterwards into Judaism, chiefly by Paul, than in any decided reformation proposed by himself. From his conduct, it appears even very improbable, that he himself would have been prepared to go so far in the path of reformation and destruction as the apostle of the Gentiles, and to admit that the law was superseded by faith, and that in Christ there was neither circumcision nor uncircumcision.

We are led by this to another interesting but difficult inquiry, viz. how far Jesus himself contemplated the admission of the Gentiles into his kingdom.

Many of the speeches attributed to Jesus, in the four gospels, evidently allude to, or imply a knowledge of, this enlargement of his church.—*Matt. viii. 11, 12:* "And I say unto you, that many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven. But the children of the kingdom shall be cast into outer darkness."—*Matt. xxi. 43:* "Therefore, I say unto you, the kingdom of God shall be taken from you (from the parable of the husbandmen, evidently the Jews), and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof."—*Matt. xxiv. 31:* "And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other."—*xxv. 32:* "And before him shall be gathered all nations."—*xxvi. 13:* "Verily, I say unto you, whosoever this gospel shall be preached in the whole world, there shall also be this, that this woman hath done, be told for a memorial of her."—*xxviii. 19:* "Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations."—*Luke, ii. 10:* "And the angel said unto them, fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all

people."—32 : "A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel."

Yet we find some speeches of Jesus' of a very different character, indicating, that he considered his mission to be to the Jews only. Matt. x. 5, 6 : "Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not."—xv. 24 : "But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." Luke makes the angel say to Mary, i. 32, 33, "He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father, Jacob, for ever, and of his kingdom there shall be no end." Mary says, ver. 54, 55, "He hath holpen his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy, as he spake to our fathers."

Now, of these two classes of sayings, which has the better claim to be considered as faithfully representing the views of Jesus himself? The latter; because they represent opinions which were grown out of date, at the time when the books were written, and therefore the writers could have no motive for inserting them, unless they were well known relics of some of the discourses of Jesus. Such a speech as "I am not sent but to the lost sheep of the house of Israel," was totally at variance with the state and prospects of the church at the time of the fall of Jerusalem, when, as the writer himself intimates, the kingdom of Christ was passing away to the Gentiles; but it agrees with the actual facts in the life of Jesus, who was a Jew, and spent his life amongst his own nation, and had, as far as we can learn, very little intercourse with, or knowledge of, the rest of the world. Whereas the sayings of the contrary description, concerning the extension of the kingdom, represent exactly what many supposed to have been the opinion prevalent at the date of the writings, when Christianity had been diffused widely through the Roman empire, and the Jewish church had become insignificant in comparison with its numerous younger sisters of the Gentiles; but they cannot be attributed to Christ himself, otherwise than as prophecies.

Another, and perhaps stronger argument to show that Christ took the more limited view of his kingdom, is found in the conduct of his followers. They continued till after the death of Stephen to preach the word to Jews only (Acts, xi. 19); and appear to have been brought into contact with the Gentiles, in consequence of the gradual extension of their society, the persecution concerning Stephen, and other incidental circumstances, rather than in pursuance of a system of universal missions, which the supposed words of Jesus (Matt. xxviii. 19; Acts, i. 8) seem to enjoin. The first Gentile conversions created all the surprise which one would expect from an unforeseen turn of things. Acts, x. 45 : "And they of the circumcision which believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy

Ghost."—xi. 18 : "When they (the Church at Jerusalem) heard these things, they held their peace, and glorified God, saying, Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life." It was made a matter of accusation against Peter that he went in unto men uncircumcised, and did eat with them, and he justifies himself, not by referring to any of the many supposed sayings of Jesus before us, concerning the universality of his kingdom, and the admission of other sheep into his fold, but by relating a recent vision, sent to him with the special object, to authorise this new direction of proselytism. In the council, concerning the necessity of keeping the law, no reference is made to the authority of Jesus himself, although any sayings of his, authorising the admission of the Gentiles, would have supplied most pertinent arguments.

Thus arises a strong probability that Jesus himself had not arrived fully at those enlarged notions of the universality of his kingdom, without distinction of Jew or Gentile, which appear so frequently in the four gospels.

4th. *Jesus was a moral and religious teacher.* This was part of the office of prophet, which he assumed; but it was subordinate to his main purpose of preaching the Kingdom of God, which forms the principal topic of his discourses.

It is not unfrequently allowed that, in the present age, the moral teachings of Jesus form the strength of Christianity. The advocates of its divine origin, from a conviction of the sufficiency of historical evidence, are probably few, in comparison with those that feel impressed with the divine authority of Jesus, by the weight, beauty, and apparent originality of his discourses and parables. In the teacher presented to us in the four gospels, an inexhaustible invention, sententiousness combined with copiousness, affability with dignity, and the whole elevated by a continual reference to the Kingdom of God. All this seems to justify the description, "never man spake like this man." Yet, considering the sublime character which mere human genius sometimes assumes, when influenced by the higher feelings, it appears unnecessary to have recourse to the hypothesis of an extraordinary divine inspiration to account for any of the discourses or doctrines of Jesus. The belief in his own appointment as a prophet and Messiah to his nation, would give an air of elevation to the manner in which his precepts were delivered, of the same kind as the actual appointment might be expected to give; and the precepts themselves can hardly be considered as *more* than what a favourably endowed mind might have drawn from its own resources, and from such materials as we know to have been within the reach of Jesus.

The greater part of the precepts in the four gospels, are to be found in different parts of the Old Testament, in the book of Ecclesiasticus, and in the ancient Rabbinical writings.

FREE-THINKERS' INFORMATION FOR THE PEOPLE.

The science of morals having for its basis the constitution of human nature, teachers of it in different ages must necessarily have much agreement with each other. The distinctive character of each moralist is chiefly discernable in the *selection* of duties, on which he lays the greatest stress and the *grounds* on which he rests moral obligation. In this view, the peculiarities which cause the doctrines of Jesus to stand apart from other systems, appear to be principally the four following:—

Firstly,—The devotional spirit. This is the most striking feature in Christianity. There is a continual reference to God. This spirit was a prominent characteristic of the Jewish nation. Their form of government, and the vicissitudes to which the nation had been exposed, combining, perhaps, with an inherent disposition, had caused the religious feeling, which is common in different degrees to all mankind, to be manifested amongst the Jews, with a depth and constancy which rendered it their most striking national feature. The Jew who neglected the worship of Jehovah, felt himself guilty, not only of impiety, but of treason and ingratitude towards the King and Father of the nation. Hence the remarkable prevalence of the religious tone observable in all the ancient Jewish books. The historian passes over secondary causes, and relates events as of the Lord's doing; he omits all reference to human motives, and tells us that his personages act as the Lord had put it into their hearts. The poets' compositions are chiefly hymns of praise. Public teachers proclaim that they come from the divine presence, and speak as the Lord said unto them. And the nation entitles the expected restoration of Israel, the Kingdom of God.

Secondly,—The doctrine of a future state. This doctrine had gradually gained among the Jews from the date of the captivity, and in the time of Jesus was held by the whole nation, excepting the Sadducees. Jesus, therefore, does not lay claim to this doctrine as peculiar to himself. Although it had naturally a large share in his last discourses to his followers, he appears to introduce it only as occasion requires, and as a doctrine well known to those whom he addressed. It certainly does not appear to be preached by Jesus in that urgent and pointed manner, which we should expect from one who considered, that the chief end of his mission was to bring immortality to light. Whence, then, has this doctrine come to be regarded as eminently distinctive of Christianity? Jesus considered his principal object to be the preaching of the kingdom of God, which, it has been seen, was generally supposed to signify the restoration and enlargement of the throne of Israel. The expectation of this kingdom continued in the church after his death; but its fulfilment in the sense originally contemplated, being continually postponed, and becoming daily more improbable, it was gradually replaced by the more generally

understood doctrine of a future judgment. The transition was not unnatural, since the idea of the Messiah, as an universal and righteous king, might easily be modified into that of judge of mankind. After the fall of Jerusalem, when it was seen that still the kingdom of heaven was not nigh, that the Son of Man did not appear on the clouds of heaven, and that the generation which beheld him was passing away, and yet these things were not fulfilled—the latter interpretation of the promises of Jesus was confirmed, the throne of Israel was forgotten, and the kingdom, understood only of the house eternal in the heavens.

Thus, by the means of Jesus, a deep-rooted national superstition was made to lend its force to the spread of the doctrine of a future state. The vigorous impulse to launch this doctrine amongst the nations to whom Christianity reached, where its own power, combined with other causes, maintained it in health and increase, after this temporary support had died away.

Thirdly,—The enforcement of "humility of spirit," and the practice of benevolence, "Blessed are the pure in spirit: for they shall see God." "Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness sake." "Come unto me for I am meek and lowly in heart." "But I say unto you, that ye resist not evil; but whosoever shall smite thee on the right cheek, turn to him the other also." These form a conspicuous feature in the doctrines attributed to Jesus. The lowly spirit here commended, however admirable under some circumstances, is, however, not original. The humble spirit inculcated, is enforced in terms of nearly equal force in the Old Testament, and in the Rabbinical writings. These commendations are indeed so frequent, that the temper in question, may be regarded as another peculiar feature in the Jewish character. Its prevalence may be accounted for by the joint influence of their religious creed, and the circumstances of the nation, from the time of the Assyrian invasions. The reign of Josiah beheld the departing reflection of the glories of David and Solomon; and Jacob, successively the slave of the Assyrians, Persians, Greeks, and Romans, obtained too short intervals of independent national existence ever to recover fully the bold and martial spirit of the conquerors of Canaan, or of the mighty men of David. The Jew who wept by the waters of Babylon, could no longer repeat the songs of Miriam and Deborah: and the continual sight of the holy city in ruins, or in diminished glory, rendered the tone of Jeremiah for many centuries, the more appropriate expressions of the nation's feelings. Checked in his first attempts, after increase and fame, the despised Israel learned to cultivate and appreciate the virtues of an humble spirit.

The benevolent spirit in the passages, "By this shall men know that ye are my disciples: if ye love one another." "Ye have heard that it hath been said, thou shalt love thy neighbour and hate

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thine enemy; but I say unto you, love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them that despitefully use you, and persecute you; that you may be the children of your Father which is in heaven, for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust." These commands betoken a generous spirit, which does good from its own impulse, and with a noble carelessness, takes no record of injuries, because resentment and malice are beneath its nature.

Upon the whole, the moral teachings of Jesus were such a combination, as might be expected from a vigorous mind, fully conversant with the notions of his age and country, but yet able to modify or add to them from his own resources.

The four gospels present Jesus to us chiefly as the Messiah. What he said and did in the short interval, during which he bore this character, was alone likely to be preserved through the traditions of nearly half a century. The writers, probably, knew, or could learn little of his history before the commencement of his preaching, that is, for the greater part of his life. This very poverty on the part of so many as four writers, does, however, seem to authorise the conjecture, that there was nothing remarkable to be told. Jesus, probably, attracted but little attention from his fellow-citizens previous to his public preaching. The contemplation of objects above the common pursuits of life, frequently produces an indifference towards, and inaptitude for them, which, in the eyes of most observers, and, in many cases justly, place the recluse below, rather than above the level of his fellow-men.

The active, but petty engagements, which would confer weight in a provincial town, were probably little sought after by one who was meditating on the prophets; and the respectable Nazariners, who filled the important offices of priest, ruler of the synagogue, or tax-gatherer, might have smiled with contempt, if told that their names would be eclipsed by the low-born, obscure, and apparently useless citizen, who, disregarding civil eminence, was engaged in the contemplation of the kingdom of God.

The few allusions which are made to the earlier life of Jesus, do not indicate that he had been considered a person of influence or weight in his own town. His townsmen distinguished him merely by his profession, and the name of his family, Mark vi. 1. 4. "He came to his own country, and his disciples followed him. And when the Sabbath-day was come, he began to teach in the synagogue; and many hearing him were astonished, saying, from whence has this man these things, and what wisdom is this which is given unto him, that even such mighty works are wrought by his hands? Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary, the brother of James and Joses, and of

Juda and Simon? and are not his sisters here with us? and they were offended at him. But Jesus said unto them, a prophet is not without honour, but in his own country, and among his own kin, and in his own house. See also Luke iv. 24; John vi. 42; Matt. xiii. 54.

His own family seem at first not only to have disbelieved the reality of his miracles, but to have looked upon his proceedings as rash and senseless. Mark iii. 21, 22. "And when his friends heard of it (the assemblage of the multitude), they went out to lay hold on him, for they said, he is beside himself. And the scribes which came down from Jerusalem, said, he hath Beelzebub, and by the prince of the devils casteth he out devils." John also relates a conversation in which the brethren of Jesus speak of his undertaking in a depreciating manner.—vii. 3. 5.

Thus, it would seem, that there had been nothing in the character of Jesus, to prepare common observers for his notoriety, and that those who were most intimate with him, regarded his undertaking with surprise and impatience. How, then, did he acquire the command of that deep reverence, and that implicit obedience which seem to have been yielded to him by his disciples? By the dazzling nature of his pretensions, the force of character with which he supported them, and his attractive social qualities.

The claim to a divine mission, and the pretension to miraculous powers, generally call forth either contempt or admiration. The idea of command over invisible influences is so calculated both to delight and to overawe, that if the claimant be able to maintain his hazardous pretensions with any apparent success, or merely to bring the minds of beholders into secret doubt, his influence becomes of the most despotic kind. The enthusiasm of Jesus was not of that blind sort which precludes all regard to common probabilities. His belief in miracles was not a chimera of a disordered imagination, but was founded in ideas common to his age and country; it permitted, therefore, the exercise of intellectual vigour, and acuteness, in the situations into which such a belief led him. He possessed, in a remarkable degree, both the boldness and the tact which are necessary to every leader of a multitude, and especially to one who sustains the character of a miracle worker. His answers to the applicants are generally such as would not compromise his reputation, whatever was the result.—"According to thy faith be it unto thee;" "Go thy way, thy faith hath saved thee," &c. When the disciples, whom he had authorised to cast out demons, asked him, why they could not cure a certain lunatic, his ready answer was, "Because of your unbelief;" and "Howbeit, *this kind* goeth not out but by prayer and fasting." When pressed by his opponents to produce a sign from heaven, he referred to the "sign of the times," and by a prompt and sharp

reproof, made them appear the baffled party. When his disciples begged permission to call down fire from heaven to destroy the uncourteous village, he answered, "Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of; for the Son of Man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them. And they went to another village." On another occasion, when called upon for a miracle, he promised at once to build the temple in three days, requiring first that it should be destroyed. His retort concerning the authority of John, and his reply concerning the tribute-money, show the same mixture of tact and intrepidity, which could always silence, although it might be dangerous or impossible to answer an opponent.

Upon the whole, we see in Jesus the singular example of a wise and good man, influenced by a kind of notions, which, when acting upon ordinary minds, produce mere visionaries, and fanatics. The belief in divine missions, and the expectation of approaching miraculous revolutions, are not uncommon; but in most states of society they are found in conjunction with ignorance, and a low degree of moral and intellectual power. A peculiar creed, literature, and national position, permitted these notions to be seized upon by a highly-endowed mind; and that which, in connection with coarseness and violence, would have produced a savage and warlike fanatic, falling in with intellect, benevolence, and natural refinement, produce a benign and philosophic enthusiast.

But when a higher office is claimed for Christ—that of a messenger from God, by a supernatural faith, miraculous works, a resurrection, and an ascension—the evidence should be of such a kind as to place the matter beyond dispute. A virtuous reformer and enthusiast, laying claim to a divine mission, and martyred by crafty priests and brutal soldiers, is that which may be admitted by an ordinary amount of historical evidence, as being in agreement with the order of nature, and the experience of man; but the miracles and divinity of Jesus require evidence of a clearer and more indisputable kind. But how stands the case? The four gospels, on these points, are *not* confirmed by testimony out of the church, disagree with each other, and contain relations contrary to the order of things. The evidence on these points is reduced to the authority of these nonentities themselves.

That the gospels are anonymous productions, is tolerably apparent; their authorship is far from certain; they were written, it is said, from forty to seventy years after the events which they profess to record; the writers do not explain how they came by their information; two of them appear to have copied from the first; all the four contain notable discrepancies, and manifest contradictions; they contain statements at variance with histories of acknowledged authority; some of them relate wonders which even many Christians are obliged

to reject as fabulous, and, in general, they present no character by which we can distinguish their tales of miracles from the fictions, which every church has found sure supporters ready to vouch for on its behalf. In these books, and by the propagators of Christianity, the miraculous part of Christ's history is presented to us, not as an indifferent fact, but as one which is to influence our whole life and conduct: the belief or unbelief of it, is even to decide our condition in another world. We are called upon to count all things as lost for the sake of Christ: "He that believeth in his heart, that God hath raised him from the dead, shall be saved;" "He that believeth not, shall be damned." We would have expected that the clearness of the evidence would have been in proportion to the necessity for belief, and that a fact, of which the recognition was requisite to the salvation or improvement of mankind in after ages, would have been attested, in such a manner as to leave no doubt of it in any reasonable mind. Mark, or the person who has finished his gospel for him, would have done more to promote belief, if, instead of threatening damnation on the want of it, he had explained the apparent contradictions between his account and Matthew's;—how it was that the latter sends the eleven into Galilee, whilst the others seem to represent them as remaining in Jerusalem; why Matthew omitted all notice of the ascension; where and when Jesus was seen by the five hundred brethren mentioned by Paul; and especially how he and his fellow-evangelists obtained their information. But the fact is, that the accounts of Christ's resurrection are in so imperfect and slovenly a state, that the evidence afforded by them, would be hardly deemed sufficient to establish an ordinary fact of any importance in a court of judicature. The accounts of the circumcision are very circumstantial, and agree in the main so well, that we should have no difficulty in admitting this as a fact, even if it were not confirmed by others. But when the writers come to the account of the resurrection, on which, from its not being confirmed by heathen or Jewish testimonies, from its deviation from the laws of nature, and from the great importance attached to the belief of it, we should have looked, from their hands at least, for the fullest, clearest, and the most accordant evidence,—here we find the story replete with confusion, contradictions, and charms, and even to be made up apparently of fragments of different dates.

(To be continued.)

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FREE-THINKERS' INFORMATION FOR THE PEOPLE.

"LET ALL HAVE FULL LIBERTY TO TEACH AND MAINTAIN WHATEVER OPINIONS THEY MAY CHOOSE."—*Melancthon.*

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ON THE CHARACTER, VIEWS, AND DOCTRINES OF CHRIST.—*Continued.*

IF the resurrection of Christ were necessary, as is pretended, to account for the rest of his history, and the origin of Christianity, the attempts made to strain out a consistent account of it from the materials before us, by inventing supplementary facts, *ad libitum*, might deserve some attention. But there is in reality no such necessity. The order of nature, the combination of human feelings and motives, at the particular juncture, are enough to account for the life and death of Jesus, and the proceedings of his followers. And whatever be our deference to Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, or the persons writing under their names, the inquirers for truth are obliged to ask, Who are these, that we should believe them, in contradiction to the known order of nature, and receive from them, as indubitable truth, stories which, coming from other mouths, we should reject as palpable fictions? Where are the proofs of their caution, judgment, and veracity? How are we assured, that they could neither be misled, nor attempt to mislead? They vouch for the resurrection of Christ, but who shall vouch for them, and certify that they were so far different from the rest of men, as to be void of credulity, and incapable of mistake or falsehood? What witness is there to prove, that they were so insensible to common human motives, as to be incapable of gratifying their love of the marvellous, and of serving their own cause, and that of their church, by either adopting or inventing "idle tales?" A satisfactory reply to these queries is impossible. We shall now proceed to point out the source from whence Jesus evidently borrowed the greater portion of his moral sayings, upon the beauty of which so much stress has been laid. The writings referred to for this purpose, are the Scriptures of the Old Testament; the book of Ecclesiasticus, by Jesus, the son of Sirach, written about 200 years before Christ; and the most ancient Rabbinical writers, viz.:—

The *Talmud*, which consists of two parts—the Mishna and the Gemara. The *Mishna*, or the first Talmud, is a collection of Pharisaical traditions, by Rabbi Jebuda Kakkadosh, A. D. 141.*

The *Gemara*, or second part of the Talmud, consists of commentaries upon, and additions to, the Mishna, collected by Rabbi Jochavan ben Eliezer; and this addition completed the Jerusalem Talmud, A. D. 469. A similar collection was made at Babylon, at the beginning of the sixth century, and called the Babylonian Talmud.

The book *Sohar*, or the Brightness, containing mystical interpretations of the Old Testament, chiefly those of Simeon ben Jochai, whose disciples made this compilation about A. D. 170.

The *Medrasehic* books, containing collections of traditions, doctrines, and stories, derived from the schools of interpretation. These collections were made by some Rabbins, whose names are unknown, about the time of Christ, and during the first, second, third, and fourth centuries. The names of the books are, *Zanchuma*, *Rabboth*, *Piske*, R. Eliezer, *Meceilla*, *Siphra*, *Siphrae*, *Pesikta*, *Rabbetha*, *Pesikta Sortarta*, *Midraseh*, *Schmuel*, *Tehillim*, and *Mischle*.

Since all these Rabbinical books were compiled after the time of Christ, it appears, at first sight, that no quotations from them can affect the question of the originality of the precepts of the gospels. But it is unquestionable, that although the compilations are of these late dates, the sayings and traditions which they contain were much earlier; and there are strong reasons for believing that they originated either before the time of Christ, or independently of any connection with the writers of the New Testament. This point is considered at great length by Schoettgenius, some of whose arguments we abridge below.*

* The remaining books (besides the Mishna and Sobar), are more recent; yet they contain the words and doctrines of the most ancient Rabbis, who lived either before or about the time of Christ. The method of teaching, then in use amongst the Jews, was calculated to preserve not only the doctrine, but the very words of their masters. They were so scrupulous on this point, that in the *Sohar*, Exod. fol. 36, he who alters the words of the law, is threatened with exclusion from heaven. The exercise of the memory thus held such an important part in the education of the Pharisaic Jews,

* Lindo's Jewish Kalendar.

They appear sufficient to establish it as a general truth, that the ancient Rabbis were not likely to borrow from the New Testament; consequently, although the want of an exact Rabbinical chronology must prevent our laying much stress on particular coincidences, the close resemblance of a large proportion of the gospel precepts, leads us to infer, that such precepts were not unknown to the Jews in the time of Christ, and might have proceeded very naturally from one assuming, at that time, the office of public instructor. We shall now quote some of the most remarkable of the sayings attributed to Christ, with parallel passages from the Jewish books.

Matt. v. 3: "*Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*"

Prov. xvi. 19: "*Better be of an humble spirit with the lowly, than to divide the spoil with the proud.*"

and their understandings were so buried beneath a heap of doctrines, that they made but a poor figure in matters requiring the free exercise of the judgment.

If any one allege, that the same recent Rabbis may have borrowed from the New Testament, I will not dispute on this point; but that the older ones quoted in the Talmud and the Medrashim, and read in the New Testament, and borrowed from it in order to impose on Christians, appears very improbable, for many reasons:—1. They hated the Gentiles and their religion so much, that they did not consider their books worth reading, fearing, also, lest they should be seduced by them from their own faith. 2. The Jews were too inferior to the Christians in critical and philological skill, to attempt such plagiarisms. 3. The Jews of the first centuries could not foresee that Donsius, Lightfoot, and other critics, would, in the course of time, explore their writings, and collate them with the New Testament. 4. They themselves allow that the Gemara is written in such an obscure manner, that they never expected that the Christians could penetrate its mysteries. 5. The books of the Talmud, and the others, contain those same errors and faults of the Pharisees, which Christ reprehended. If, then, the writers had read these things in the New Testament, it is hardly credible that they would have inserted them in their writings, and thereby have afforded a testimony to the truth of Christ's words.

Moreover, there occur matters and opinions peculiar to the ancient Jewish church, before and during the time of Christ. It appears, then, that Christ and his apostles did not entirely reject the good things which they found amongst the Jews, but used them felicitously against the Pharisaic abuses, thus slaying their adversaries with their own weapons, in which proceeding, the wisdom of Christ is not sufficiently recognised by those ignorant of this kind of learning.—*Schoettgen de Lectione Rabbinorum.*

Micah, vi. 8: "*What doth the Lord require of thee but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God.*"

Pike Aboth. c. iv. 4: "*Rabbi Levites Jafensis said, Let it be thy chief desire to be of an humble spirit, for the hopes of man are as a worm.*"

Sanhedrim,* fol. 43. 2: "*R. Jehuda ben Levi said, whilst the temple stood, if any man offered a holocaust, he obtained the reward of a holocaust; if an oblation, he obtained the reward of an oblation. But if a man be of an humble spirit, the Scripture considers him as having offered all sacrifices.*"

Matt. v. 5: "*Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.*"

Psalm, xxxvii. 11: "*But the meek shall inherit the earth, and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace.*"

Matt. v. 7: "*Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy.*"

Schabboth, fol. 151. 2: (Tract of the Mishna) "*Whosoever hath mercy on men, on him also hath God mercy. But he who sheweth no mercy to men, neither to him shall God show mercy.*"

Matt. v. 8: "*Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.*"

Psalm, xxiv. 3, 4: "*Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord? and who shall stand in his holy place? he that hath clean hands, and a pure heart.*"

Philo de Essæis: "*They have attained the highest holiness in the worship of God, not by sacrificing animals, but by cultivating purity of heart.*"

Matt. v. 16: "*Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.*"

Prov. iv. 18: "*But the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.*"

Mechilta, fol. 27. 2: "*Simeon ben Eliezer said, when the Israelites do the will of God, then his name is glorified in the world.*"

Matt. v. 38, 39: "*Ye have heard that it hath been said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth, but I say unto you that ye resist not evil.*"

Prov. xx. 22: "*Say not thou, I will recompense evil; but wait on the Lord, and he shall save thee.*"

Prov. xxix. 29: "*Say not, I will do so to him, as he hath done to me.*"

Matt. v. 39: "*Whosoever smiteth thee on the right cheek,*" &c.

Bava Kama, fol. 92. 2: (Tract Mishna) "*For what is the proverb which is commonly said? If thy neighbour call thee ass, place upon thyself an ass's saddle. For thus it is written, (Genesis, xvi. 8) 'Return to thy mistress, even though thou be much vexed with her.'*"

* One of the Sixty-one Tracts of the Mishna.

Matt. v. 42: "Give to him that asketh, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away."

Eccles. iv. 5: "Turn not thine eye away from the needy."

Deut. xv. 8: "But thou shalt open thine hand wide unto thy poor brother, and shalt surely lend him sufficient for his need."

Josephus de Essenes: "Every one of them gives what he hath to him that wanteth it."

Matt. v. 44: "Love your enemies."

Schahhoth, fol. 88. 3: (Tract Mishna) "Our Rabbins deliver to us: They who receive scorn, but scorn no man; who bear reproaches, and return them not; who show love to men, and rejoice not in tribulations,—of them the Scripture saith, 'They shall love him, and be as the sun going forth in his might.'"

Aboth. R. Nathan, c. 23: "He is a hero who maketh his enemy a friend."

Siphra, fol. 174. 1: "If thou seest an Israelite, who rejoices in the adversity of his enemy, he is perfectly impious."

Matt. v. 44: "Bless them that curse you."

Sanhedrim, fol. 48. 2; 49. 1: "R. Jehuda said, (from the mouth of Raf.) They say thus, in the common proverb, Suffer thyself to be cursed, but do not thou curse others."

Matt. v. 44: "Pray for them which despitefully use you."

Sohar, Genes. fol. 67. col. 263: "It is commanded a man that he pray for the impious, so that they may be converted for the better, and not descend into hell."

Matt. v. 46: "If ye love them which love you, what thank have ye? do not even the publicans the same?"

Luke, vi. 35: "Do good and lend, hoping for nothing again."

Piske Aboth. c. v. 10: "There are four classes of men. One says, What is mine is mine, and what is thine is thine: this is a meddling class, and some say that the people of Sodom were such. Another says, What is mine is thine, and what is thine is mine: of such is the common people. He who says, What is mine is thine, and what is thine let it be thine: he is pious. But he who says, What is thine is mine, and what is mine let it be mine: he is impious."

Matt. vii. 1: "Take heed that ye do not your alms before men to be seen of them, otherwise ye have no reward of your Father which is in heaven."

Sohar, fol. 4. 1: "Whosoever lendeth to any one in public, with him God dealeth according to justice. But he who does it secretly, with him dwelleth the divine blessing."

Bava Bathra, fol. 10. 2: (Tract Mishna) "All alms and mercy, done by the heathens, are sins to them, since they do them only to obtain glory thereby."

Matt. vi. 6: "When thou prayest, enter into thy closet."

Tanchuma, fol. 22. 2: "R. Benjamin ben Levi said, If any one sitteth apart, or in his closet, and studieth the law, I will make him known to men."

Sohar, Genes. fol. 114. col. 454: "It is not needful that a man pray aloud, but he ought to pray in a low tone, so that his words may not be heard."

Matt. vi. 7: "Use not vain repetitions."

Eccles. vii. 14: "Use not many words in a multitude of elders, and make not much babbling when thou prayest."

Berachoth, fol. 61. 1: "Let the words of a man always be few before the face of God."

R. Eligahu, the Kaseite, in Tieglandius de Secta Karæorum, p. 168: "In vain will any one multiply idle words (in Hebrew, the same as Matt. xii. 36) in his prayers."

We shall now dissect the celebrated "Lord's Prayer."

Matt. vi. 9: "Our Father which art in heaven."

Bammidbar Rabba, sect. 17: "God is the Father, and Israel are his children." Then follows the proof that God had performed all the peculiar parental offices for Israel, viz. teaching the law, supplying food, &c.

Ver. 9: "Hallowed be thy name."

Eccles. xxiii. 9: "Use not thyself to the naming of the Holy One."

That the same formula of prayer was known to the Jews, is shown by a quotation from their ritual books, by Vitringa de Synagoga, Vet. lib. 3. p. 962: "His great name be magnified and hallowed in the world, which he created according to his pleasure, and may his kingdom reign. May his redemption spring forth, and the anointed (Messiah) quickly come and deliver his people."

Sohar, Exod. fol. 55. col. 217: "There is no sanctification in heaven, unless there be sanctification on earth."

Sohar, Deut. fol. 127. col. 503: "When the number of sins is increased on the earth, then the holy name is not glorified on earth."

Matt. vi. 10: "Thy kingdom come."

Sanhedrim, fol. 28. 2: "R. Jehuda and R. Seira both said, Prayers which say nothing concerning the kingdom, do not deserve the name of prayers."

Ver. 10: "In earth, as in heaven."

Sohar, Exod. fol. 28. 170; 111: "God wills that his name be glorified on earth, as it is glorious in heaven."

Matt. vi. 11, 12: "Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors."

Rosch Haschana, fol. 17. 2: "A man borrowed from another, and fixed a time for repayment before the king, and swore by the life of the king:

When the time was past, and he could not pay his debt, he came as a suppliant to the king, who said, What thou hast done against me is forgiven thee; but go to thy creditor, and seek forgiveness also of him. The same proceeding is held with respect to the sins committed by a man against God, and those which he commits against his neighbour."

Synopsis Sohar, p. 90. n. 79: "A man ought every night to forgive the fault of him that offendeth him."

Matt. vi. 13: "*For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory for ever.*"

1 Chron. xxix. 11: "Thine, O Lord, is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty: for all that is in the heaven and in the earth is thine; thine is the kingdom of the Lord, and thou art exalted as head above all."

Matt. vi. 14: "*For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you.*"

Eccles. xxviii. 2: "Forgive thy neighbour the hurt that he hath done unto thee; so shall thy sins also be forgiven when thou prayest."

Matt. vi. 19, 20: "*Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, . . . but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven.*"

Eccles. xxix. 11: "Lay up thy treasure according to the commandments of the Most High, and it shall bring thee more profit than gold."

Bava Bathra, fol. 11. 1: "The brethren of King Mombazus reproached him for delapidating the treasures of his ancestors, to which his fathers had always added. He replied, My father collected treasures on the earth, but I in heaven; my father laid up treasures in a place where the hand (of man) could rule them, but I lay up in a place whither no hand can reach."

Matt. vi. 25: "*Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink, nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body more than raiment?*"

Psalms, lv. 22: "Cast thy burden on the Lord, and he shall sustain thee; he shall never suffer the righteous to be moved."

Philo de Essenes: "They eat no food more costly than coarse bread seasoned with salt, . . . and drink no liquid but the clear water of the stream."

Matt. vi. 26: "*Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not; neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them.*"

In the Gemara, Jerusalem Talmud, Kiddaschin, (according to Buxtorf's Lexicon,) col. 2082: "Hast thou ever seen a lion carrying burdens, a stag gathering the summer fruits, a fox planting, or a wolf selling olives? And yet they are fed without labour. But why were they created? To serve me. And why was I created? To serve my

Creator. Hence, from the lesser to the greater, I conclude, if those creatures, which were created to serve me, are fed without labour, should not I, rather, who was created to serve my Creator? What is the cause, then, for which I am compelled to obtain my food by labour? Answer—my sins."

Matt. vii. 2: "*With what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged.*"

Schabboth, fol. 127, 2: "Our Rabbins have delivered to us: He who judgeth his neighbour, by the way of equity, of him shall others judge in the same manner."

Matt. vii. 12: "*Therefore, all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do you even so to them; for this is the law and the prophets.*"

Tobit, iv. 15: "Do that to no man which thou hatest."

Aboth. R. Nathan, c. 15: "As a man wisheth himself to be honoured, so let him show the same honour to others. And as a man doth not wish to hear himself ill-spoken of, so let him beware of speaking ill of others."

Matt. xviii. 4: "*Whosoever shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest,*" &c.

Zanchuma, fol. 36. 4: "R. Ame said, It is great glory to a young man, when he becometh as little children."

Bava Mezia, fol. 74. 2: (Tract Mishna) "Whosoever maketh himself little on account of the words of the law in this world, he becometh great in the world to come."

Matt. xxii. 36: "*Which is the great commandment in the law?*"

Ver. 37: "*Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.*"

Ver. 39: "*And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.*"

Mendelsohn relates the following story (Jesus, vol. ii. p. 110): "Rabbi," said a Pagan to Hillel the elder, (who lived in the century before Christ,) "wilt thou teach me the whole law while I am standing on one leg?" Hillel replied, "Son, love thy neighbour like thyself. This is the text of the law; all the rest is commentary. Now go thy ways and study."

Deut. iv. 5: "And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind."

Levit. xix. 18: "Thou shalt not avenge, nor bear any grudge against the children of thy people, but thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself."

Many other sayings, attributed to Christ, could be dealt with in the same manner as the foregoing; but we have rather chosen to select the most prominent, in illustration of the want of originality, in the moral doctrines. Jesus appears to have been well acquainted with the doctrines which proceeded from the Jewish schools, and took the

liberty of selecting, altering, or adding to them, to suit his particular purpose. The preceptive part of the gospel appears before us, as the result obtained by the sifting of the Jewish Scriptures, and of the lessons of the Jewish schools, by the active mind of Jesus, and by the infusion of fresh material from his own resources. We have thus, in our examination into the true character of Jesus, and in the exposition we have given of the origin of his leading moral doctrines, shown that natural causes are alone sufficient to account for the origin of Christianity.

The lower classes, in every age and country, owing to their less acquaintance with physical science, are disposed to see special interventions in ordinary events, and receive, readily, miraculous tales, when brought to them; but about the time of Christ, even grave historians, both Greek and Roman, admitted such tales into their most finished compositions. Amongst the Jews, especially, the national temper, creed, and low degree of scientific attainments, promoted the taste for the miraculous; consequently, their accomplished historian, Josephus, although obviously checked by his fear of Greek and Roman criticism, and without any other apparent motive than a pure love for the marvellous, could not resist the temptation of introducing abundance of miraculous stories. The historians of the early reformed Jewish, or Christian churches, were inferior to Josephus in education and literary attainments, wrote under stronger excitement, had in view the interest and honour of their own newly-risen sect, and apparently intended their works for the use of their brethren, who were influenced by the same feelings and opinions as themselves. It was to be expected, then, that these histories should contain a larger proportion of the miraculous than that of Josephus. And as it would be thought very harsh to condemn Josephus, as totally unworthy of credit, and to throw aside his history, because he partook somewhat of a vice peculiar to his age and country, so may we also look with indulgence on the inaccuracy and credulity of those parties who have depicted the life and character of Jesus, in the books of the New Testament.

To traverse the evangelical writings, exposing their weak points, and throwing down, successively, fictions consecrated by the authority of ages, is a harsh and ungracious task, and is only a belief in the expediency of reducing such tales to their due estimation, in the opinion of mankind, that can induce us to enter willingly upon the destructive process. The cause of progressive mental improvement requires that such narrations should be placed amongst the things of romance, rather than of history: this being done, the imagination may still delight itself by contemplating them in what now appears to be their true and proper light; and the more freely, from its being now unchecked by the necessity of explaining and reconciling those absurdities and inconsistencies which must belong

to them, when viewed as matters of fact. Many of the finer thoughts and feelings of mankind find a vent in fiction, expressed either by painting, poetry, or the poetic tale; and the perception of the historical inaccuracy does not prevent us from sharing the thoughts and feelings which have embodied themselves in this manner. The monotheist of the present day feels awakened in him the conceptions of the beautiful belonging to ancient Greece, when viewing the varied and graceful forms of the council of Olympus: the protestant, who regards monarchism as a social evil, and who sees, amongst the fathers of the church, men of character and claims worse than doubtful, may yet appreciate the feeling which led men to tread in cloistered cells as on holy ground, and to attribute supernatural influence to the relics and images of martyrs and saints: and the critical inquirer, who sees in the mother of Jesus merely the obscure Jewish matron, may yet comprehend the mixture of devotion and chivalry which gradually raised homage into adoration, and depicted her with the placid and majestic features of the "Virgin Mother of God." In like manner, whilst recognising the true character of the evangelical fables, we may still discover in them, and share the feelings from which, for the most part, they sprung,—respect and attachment towards a character of unwonted power and excellence. A rude age expressed its perception of moral ascendancy, by decking it with those ornaments which were then considered to be its appropriate and deserved accompaniments,—miracles, signs, and wonders; the followers of the Reformer of Galilee, endeavoured to express their own sentiments towards, and to excite the same in others, by attributing to him a command over nature, and by representing him as ascending to the right hand of God. The modern observer has learned to distinguish more correctly the boundaries of the moral and physical worlds, and can appreciate superiority in the one, without ascribing it to an extraordinary control over the other. Nevertheless, he may be able to understand, feel, and translate the rude, but emphatic language of former ages; and, in the delineations of Jesus healing the sick, stilling the tempest, walking on the sea, or transfigured on the mount, may contemplate a fact of no small interest or importance, viz.: the deep and solemn reverence which mental and moral power, unassisted by grosser means of influence, had been able, in a remote age and country, to inspire, and may thus refine the false glare of the miraculous, thrown around Jesus, into a more serene and steady light.

We cannot close this article better than presenting the reader with the opinion of Robert Owen respecting Jesus, which will be found to agree in the main with the views that have been already expressed.

The following statement of Mr Owen's opinions was called forth by a correspondent in the *Morning Herald*, under the signature of "Amicus,"

asking him why he opposed the doctrines and moral discipline of Jesus of Nazareth, and if he did so after a proper investigation of the subject, &c. ? To which Mr Owen thus replied :—

"Sir,—You ask me why I am 'an enemy and opposer of the Benevolent Jesus of Nazareth,' and 'What it is in the blessed Redeemer to which your conviction leads you to object? Is it his life? his character? or, if not, then is it the peculiar doctrines which he promulgated? or the moral discipline which he enforced? Do you consider his doctrines less imbued with benevolence than his actions, or his moral discipline injurious to man's individual and social welfare? "

"You afterwards say, 'You, no doubt, deeply reflected upon the conduct and religion of Christ, before you presumed to include his religion in the general denunciation which you have uttered against all creeds; may I solicit an acquaintance with the results of your reflections, that I may be enabled to account for the extraordinary amount of benevolence and infidelity which your statements and actions have evinced you to possess? "

"These are, indeed, questions of deep interest, not only to you and me, but to all, who have been trained in any religious creed.

"I will now endeavour to answer them, in such a manner, that no one, hereafter, shall misunderstand the convictions, which an accurate observation and patient comparison of facts with each other, and, I believe, unprejudiced deductions from them, have forced upon me, even (for a long time) in direct opposition to my wishes, for my early education made me very desirous to remain a sincere Christian, according to the general acceptance of the term.

"I have not, I cannot have, any personal enmity or hostility to any character, ancient or modern. Could it be possible for such an anomalous being, as the devil is described to be, to exist under the circumstances, in which it has been written, he came into his present state, I should not blame him, but pity his sufferings, and do all in my power to relieve him from them. Such are the feelings which the religion I entertain forces upon me. I, therefore, as expressed in my former letter, am not 'an opponent of the Benevolent Jesus of Nazareth.'

"'And what is there,' you ask, 'in the blessed Redeemer, to which your convictions led you to object? "

"I reply, whatever there is in the doctrines of those who profess to be his followers that is in opposition to facts, or to truth.

"His life and his character, as they here have been handed down to us, appear, according to the light of the period in which he lived, to have been irreproachable. Judging from the popular documents which we possess respecting him, he was a sincere reformer of the abuses of his time. He was benevolent and kind-hearted, and desired to relieve the poor in their distress. He was opposed

to hypocrisy, and sternly recommended what was just, and that all men should love one another.

"This was going a great way for the time in which he lived, and that he was sincere in his desire to ameliorate the condition of mankind, no one can doubt, if the testimony regarding him be true, for he was willing to sacrifice himself for the sins of the world, according to the phrase then used; that is, he felt so great a love for mankind, that to relieve them from sin and misery, or, which is the same, ignorance and poverty, he was willing, so far, to oppose the popular prejudices of the day, as to run the risk of life, by teaching doctrines which he thought were true, in opposition to the generally received notions of the people.

"He knew what was injurious in the effects; he desired to remove these, and to introduce better. He perceived that the world was selfish or individualised; that it was full of envy, hatred, strife, covetousness, and all uncharitableness; that these could not exist with real virtue and happiness; and that before this change could be made in their character, they must be taught to acquire new thoughts, and new feelings, to love one another in all sincerity; that, in fact, they must be born again into a new life, in which the purest charity, and affection, should pervade the whole man.

"This he knew and taught; and in those days it was a great deal for any one to know, and to teach; but he knew not the real cause of these evils in man, or the practical remedy for them.

"He knew not the true origin or cause which perpetually generates envy, hatred, strife, malice, wars, murders, massacres, covetousness, and all uncharitableness; he knew that all these were grievous evils, and he desired to remove them. He knew, also, that to make man happy, he must be taught to acquire affection and charity for every individual of the race.

"As the 'Benevolent Jesus of Nazareth' knew not the cause of the evil that he discovered in man, or of the miseries which, in consequence of it, pervaded society, so neither do his followers know or suspect the real cause of the one or the other, nor the practical remedy for them; and, therefore, these errors and evils remain now, and afflict man, and render the world as wretched as in all times past.

"The great remedy of the 'Benevolent Jesus of Nazareth,' for all the evils of human life, was in the precept, 'Love thy neighbour as thyself;' and, whenever this precept can be applied to practice, the remedy thus proposed will be, indeed, found all-powerful; for man will then know no sin, and the earth will be in peace, its inhabitants will be full of intelligence and happiness,—continually increasing, as real knowledge advances, will pervade all parts of the world; and then will the fulness of time be come.

"The first coming of Christ, when relieved from the mystery, with which the ignorance and

ON THE CHARACTER, VIEWS, AND DOCTRINES OF CHRIST.

inexperience of our ancestors clothed all new and important knowledge, to make the multitude receive it with veneration—means the announcement of some useful truth essential for man to know, to prepare him to attain future happiness; but truths spoken in parables, and mixed with errors, and therefore incapable of being applied to practice; and, therefore, no man has yet been formed 'to love his neighbour as himself.'

"The second coming of Christ means the open promulgation of simple truth, freed from all error relative to the nature of man, and the practice which he must adopt, before he can 'love his neighbour as himself'—before there can be 'peace on earth, and good will to men'—and when there will be no need of parables, mysteries, or miracles. Turn your thoughts inward, and ask yourselves—What do the signs of the times portend? Are there any indications of the period approaching, when men may speak and hear the whole truth, regarding themselves undefiled by any error, and without parables, mysteries, and miracles?

"Is not the earth on this day full of the means, if they were rightly directed, to give real knowledge, abundance of wealth, and the best and kindest feelings to all its inhabitants? And yet, are not the latter, for want of truth, devoid of error, these subjects, afflicted with mystical creeds, with poverty, almost too much for men to bear, and with all manner of inferior passions and feelings, and especially with selfishness and uncharitableness?

"And shall the means for attaining this good for man, be, day by day, before us, and shall these evils continue to overwhelm us with crime and misery?

"The reply to these questions, is my answer to the question, 'Why I appear to oppose the Benevolent Jesus of Nazareth.'

"The truths, which the Christian history attribute to him, hidden as they are in parables, confounding as they have been made by mysteries and miracles, and defiled as they are by pagan errors and imaginations, are totally unfit to relieve the world from its present evils, and to prevent their continuance, or their accumulation, through all future ages.

"The world of intellect has been growing, for nearly 2000 years, since the 'Benevolent Jesus of Nazareth' spoke in parables, and in mysteries; new facts, new sciences, and new knowledge of various descriptions have been subsequently made known. And these new facts, sciences, and knowledge, have so accumulated, as now to render it necessary, nay, unavoidable, that new arrangements for the forming the character of man, and uniting him with his fellows in a superior and happy state of society, cannot be much longer delayed.

"Will the followers of the 'Benevolent Jesus of Nazareth' stand still, and adhere to olden times, when it was stated that men, for a season,

owing to their ignorance, or partial blindness, were compelled to see as through a glass darkly? Or will they now bestir themselves in good earnest, and press forward to gain the prize of their high calling, to endeavour to pass through this valley of the shadow of death, in which our friends are daily dying of famine around us, and attain for themselves and all future generations, a state and condition of life, in which there shall be no wailing or repining in our streets; but in which overwhelming circumstances shall be formed to prevent the possible existence of ignorance, or poverty, or of crime.

"I ask you, Amicus, you who, by your letter, seem desirous of removing the dim glass now before your eyes, and the eyes of the whole Christian and religious world; will you press onward, and endeavour to pass from darkness to light? from useless reveries into practical operations, founded on real knowledge, that will enable you to attain all you seek?

"It is for you and your friends, having the power in your hands, now to form these arrangements, in mercy to suffering humanity.

"Let us now lay aside our angry feelings; let us henceforth cease to apply abusive and unmeaning, but initiating terms to our fellow-men, erring, as all of us have, from our birth. Can you, and your friends, expand your minds, and so far overcome your early prepossessions, as to bury all distinctive deriding terms in oblivion; and be content to become indeed, and in very truth, searchers after truth, for the truth's sake, and to be denominated simply the 'Lovers of Truth'?

"If you, and your friends, can now do this, then may we expect the dawn of a new day to be at hand, and a new superior life to be opening upon us.

"Then shall all the opprobrious terms which have hitherto divided, which now divide man from man, cease from our lips, and be no longer used to prevent us from loving one another.

"While the terms are applied of Jew or Gentile, or Hindoo or Christian, of Mahometan or Pagan, of Sceptic, of Deist, of Atheist, or any other, conveying an unkind or uncharitable feeling, by which men shall distinguish the errors of each other; it will continue beyond human power to make man to 'love his neighbour as himself,' or to receive within his bosom the feelings of pure and genuine charity.

"You term me an infidel. An infidel to what? to the notions, which, whether true or false you have been compelled, without your knowledge or consent, to receive from infancy, and for which you never can be entitled to merit, or can deserve demerit? No, Sir; I am no infidel! I abhor the term as well as the deed. To avoid the latter, I have made the sacrifice of every private consideration, and I am yet ready to make all the sacrifices that man can make to remove infidelity from the world. To make it unknown to

man. How ardently do I feel while I write this, that no infidelity existed upon the earth. That all then were placed under those circumstances, in which they might successfully search for truth, and when they found it, they might, in all simplicity and good faith, declare it openly and freely to all their fellow-men.

"No, Sir, I am no infidel to truth! Willingly would I now sacrifice the few years I may yet live, to establish it in all its purity and never-changing consistency, for the benefit of this and future generations.

"But, Sir, to inconsistencies, of all descriptions, as they must be opposed to truth; to all mysteries beyond our comprehension, and to all miracles opposed to the laws of nature, I am compelled to be an infidel.

"Yet, why should there be anger or the slightest irritation from man to man because of that, which, by the constitution of his nature, he could not avoid?

"He is compelled, by the constitution of his nature, which he did not create for himself, to receive his convictions and his feelings; and when he does not express these in all the genuineness of faithfulness, then, and then alone, is man an infidel.

"An infidel to his own thoughts and feelings; an infidel to his fellow-man, from whom he hides the truth; and an infidel to that power, whatever it may ultimately prove to be, which gave him being, and a living existence.

"Now, Sir, those questions, which you addressed to me, in the true spirit of humanity, I have answered according to the bare knowledge I have received, and without there being, as far as I know myself, a particle of infidelity admitted into them. And, perhaps, what I have stated, may now enable you to account for, as you express it, the extraordinary union of benevolence and infidelity, which you say, my own statements and actions have evidenced me to possess.

"With thanks for your letter, and a sincere desire for your happiness, permit me to subscribe myself your friend and servant,

"ROBERT OWEN."

OF GOD.

The philosopher neither denies nor asserts the being of a God: having no proof on either side of the question. Proof of the non-existence of a God can never be obtained: there may be many Gods, many existences differing from humanity, superior and inferior; but *may be* is no proof. Since God has never been made manifest to our senses, through which medium alone we can obtain satisfactory evidence, we can have no *knowledge* of his existence. They, to whom God has revealed himself, must believe in him; but with them the efficacy of the revelation rests: their account thereof is but the evidence of Man, who frequently errs, and sometimes lies. We must either allow all accounts of revelations, and consequently admit

the truth of the Koran as well as of the Bible; or, on the same ground that we reject the one, refuse all. Implicit faith in every pretender to direct communion with God, whether Moses or Mahomet, St John, Johanna Southcote, or John Thém; or entire rejection of that which can never be distinguished from imposture.

There is needed, then, an express revelation to every individual of every generation: "*Let God so speak, and the Universe will be convinced!*"

SOUL.

A vague and indeterminate term, expressing an unknown principle of known effects, which we feel in ourselves. The word "soul" answers to the "anima" of the Latins—to the "pneuma" of the Greeks—to the term which each and every nation has used to express what they understood no better than we do.—*Voltaire.*

DEFINITIONS OF PLEASURE.

It is difficult to say what pleasure means. Pleasure in a country miss just "come out," means "a race ball, and so many partners, that she has danced till she can hardly stand." Pleasure to an aspirant after fashion, means "a card for Devonshire-house, or a nod from Lady —." Pleasure to a schoolboy, means "tying a string to his school-fellow's toe when he is asleep, and pulling till it awakes him." Pleasure to a man of an inquiring mind, means "a toad inside a stone, or a beetle running with its head off." Pleasure to a man of taste, means "a first-rate artist and a good dinner." Pleasure to a labouring man, means "doing nothing." Pleasure to a fine lady, means "having something to do to drive away the time." Pleasure to an antiquarian means, "an illegible inscription." Pleasure to a connoisseur, means "a dark, invisible, very fine picture." Pleasure to a philosopher—a modern philosopher, a young philosopher, means "liking nothing, despising everything, and proving every one a simpleton except himself." Pleasure to a beggar, means "a sovereign by mistake, instead of a shilling." Pleasure to a sailor, "a fresh breeze, and a sight of land." Pleasure to the afflicted, "a tear." Pleasure to the sweetest of all tempers, "the last word in an argument." Pleasure to the social, "the human face divine." Pleasure to the morose, "I shan't see a soul for the next six months." Pleasure to an author, "the last page of his manuscript"—bliss inexpressible—"Finis." Pleasure to all, every one in their own way, and that way a different one.—*Anne Grey.*

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FREE-THINKERS' INFORMATION FOR THE PEOPLE.

"LET ALL HAVE FULL LIBERTY TO TEACH AND MAINTAIN WHATEVER OPINIONS THEY MAY CHOOSE."—*Melancthon.*

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RELIGIOUS PROSECUTIONS AND FREE DISCUSSION.

WE had thought, until lately, that legal prosecutions for religious opinions were at an end, and that men would be left at perfect liberty to express their sentiments on all subjects without hindrance or restraint. The extension of knowledge, and the spirit of the age, we deemed to be at variance with the old-fashioned methods of convincing "heretics" and "infidels" by the executioner and the turnkey. In this, however, we have been mistaken, as the recent proceedings in the cases of Messrs Southwell and Holyoake go to prove—cases which establish the fact, that practical liberty of speech is yet a luxury dependant on the tender mercies of pious magistrates and common informers, and which can, at any moment, be destroyed, should these parties but will to do so. Leaving them out of the consideration of the questions, the peculiar sentiments for which Messrs Southwell and Holyoake have suffered the wrath of the "powers that be," whether those sentiments were true or false, decorously or indecorously expressed, we shall proceed to examine the right, justice, and expediency of such prosecutions, and endeavour to show the danger which threatens every kind of free inquiry, if such proceedings go unchecked, if men are not allowed to speak their opinions, however extreme, freely, upon all subjects, however sacred or time-hallowed they may be supposed to be.

Does the welfare of a country demand that attacks upon the prevalent religion of the country should constitute a legal offence? Of course, we mean by "attacks," speaking or writing against it, and not molesting the persons, invading the property, or interrupting the worship of its professors. The Christian, whether Catholic or Protestant, cannot answer this question in the affirmative; for even if he should go so far back as to say of those who accomplished the subversion of Druidism, or the Reformation from Popery, that they were criminal, although from these causes he became a *Christian* and a Protestant, neither of which he could else have been; yet must he allow that the apostles wrote and preached against Judaism, as taught by the rulers of the Jews, and against that Paganism which was the established religion of the Reformation. He cannot maintain

that they (the apostles) were rightfully incarcerated, or that the suppression of their doctrine, had it been practicable, would have been a public benefit.

The legislators of England cannot answer this question in the affirmative; for, by voting supplies, or affording facilities to societies for the propagation of the gospel in foreign parts, to missionary societies of various descriptions, and to bible societies, (for what is the bible but a continuance of other systems of superstition?) they are lending their sanction to attacks upon the prevalent religions of half the nations of the earth. This is not done as a means of annoying other countries with which we are at war, as the forgery of assignments may have been, while that of bank notes brought men to the gallows. It is considered a moral and philanthropic act; not a suborning of crime, or a violation of the law of nations. A British subject would be punished for firing into a Turkish vessel; but he is not punishable for attacking the captain and sailors with bibles and tracts, which, if they read and believe, will make them apostates from the faith of Mahomet, and blasphemers of the Koran. While on terms of amity with the Sublime Porte, the laws of England restrain us from despoiling them of their property, but not from despoiling them of their religion.

The existing religion of the country either is, or is not, susceptible of improvement. If the former, allowing it to be the province of the government to decide what is an improvement, and how it should be made, the freest discussion of its merits should be authorised as the best mode of furnishing materials for a reformation. Only thus can be ascertained what will, and what will not abide the test of reason and utility, and where alteration, omission, or addition is expedient. And if the latter, if it be already absolutely perfect, still should the attempt be made to controvert it be lawful, for the result can only be a more general and vivid perception of its worth, and consequently the strengthening and extension of its influence.

External uniformity with the requisitions of a religious system is the utmost that can ever be enforced; and constituted as men are, it is all the uniformity that is ever likely to exist, except in

the very lowest stage of mental cultivation. How much it costs to produce this uniformity, and what it is worth when produced, are points pretty well ascertained by history; and so ascertained as to render argument unnecessary.

The question may then be narrowed to whether Christianity be an exception? Is it, upon the whole, for the good of the community that the denial of the truth of Christianity should be an offence against the law?

Nothing can be more desirable than that every member of the community should be under the influence of correct moral principles. If every one loved his neighbour as himself, and did unto others as he would that they should do unto him, and practised that universal benevolence which beholds a brother in every human being, whatever his country, colour, or religion, the result would undoubtedly be a sum of happiness immeasurably greater than any nation has ever yet obtained. But whatever Christianity may be defined to be, in its moral aspect, certain we are, that this morality is not the practical Christianity of our age and country. The Church of England turns out but few, if any, of this improved workmanship. Our spiritual machinery produces in general but a very inferior article; and still less can be expected from the power which is merely temporal. Penal laws can have very little efficacy for such a purpose. They may make the "outward sign" imperative, but they never can bestow the "inward grace."

The effective prohibition of a public denial of Christianity, and the prohibition, if made at all, is meant to be effective, is then morally certain to produce a quantum of hypocrisy commensurate with the infidelity which it coerces into outward conformity. How this hypocrisy should improve the national character, or increase the national prosperity, or in what way it is more to be desired than so much open and honest unbelief, it is out of our power to imagine. Several reasons may be assigned for regarding it as the greater evil of the two. First, granting that in some instances a defective faith may be the source of vicious conduct, still, hypocrisy is a vice in itself, a mean, detestable and polluting one, and to the full as likely as unbelief to generate a brood of vices with all the rapidity of the geometrical ratio. Sincerity is one of the last things on which penalties should be levied. The great spiritual physicians who would vaccinate the nation with hypocrisy, to prevent the eruption of infidelity, are not acting on the true Jennerian analogy. The preventive disease is too loathsome to be voluntarily endured for any such purpose. Again, the prohibition of avowed unbelief increases the very dreaded result to which we are told infidelity leads—destroying the security of an oath. "How," we are asked, "could public justice ever be safely administered without the aid of the gospel sanction alone, between the assertion of infidel and of believing witnesses?" There are not many witnesses, we apprehend, the

credibility of whose testimony is much enhanced by the introductory ceremony so irreverently performed in our courts of justice, and in other places. A character for veracity, and a safe passage through the perils of a skilful cross-examination, would be satisfactory make-weights with an intelligent jury, for an unsworn infidel testimony against an unsupported Christian deposition. Let it be, however, that the oath of the infidel is worth no more than his word, surely the ends of justice are most in danger from a system which, by making avowed unbelief an offence, keeps both judge and jury in the dark as to what class of witnesses they have to deal with. For, if men were allowed the free expression of their opinions, the unbeliever would then come into court as an unbeliever, not a hypocrite; and experience would soon ascertain whether any, and what deduction from his credibility should be made on that account. And if unbelief be so intimately connected with vicious conduct as priests say it is, then, to identify its votaries with Christians by the penal suppression of their dissent, must, according to the saints' own reasoning, tend to lower the standard of Christian morality both in appearance and reality. Besides, the interdiction of open denial and direct attack will compel unbelievers to adopt that insidious and undermining system which is so much more dangerous, because it is less obvious and more difficult to encounter. The man who buys a book professedly atheistical or deistical, which declares hostility to Christianity on its title page, and goes manfully into the argument against revealed religion, knows what he is about. He reads it with his mind on the alert; and if he make a parlour guest of it, it is because he thinks it not dangerous for the family, and they are not imposed on by specious appearances, and a forged letter of introduction. The case is very different when the history, the novel, the poem, the metaphysical essay, the scientific treatise are employed as vehicles of scepticism; here, never avowing the object, but always pursuing it; sapping the foundations of faith without noise, and leaving the building to fall of itself; leading the reader almost unconsciously to the relinquishment of opinions without ever having gone into a full investigation of their evidence. Against this no vigilance can guard, and it augments greatly the difficulty both of escape and refutation. The Christian, therefore, if he is confident of the truth and success of his own views, acts most injudicious and impolitic, in recommending the suppression, by any means whatsoever, of the free expression of opinion. It may be very laudable for the legislature to compel all subjects to be saved, even by the heaviest penalties; but unless a hypocritical faith be as availing for that purpose as a sincere faith, the attempt can only affect a present evil, and not accomplish a future good. Now, is it for the public weal, that all men who are to be saved, and who will not be terrified into hypocrisy, should be impri-

soned, banished, and hanged; for to that we must come at last, unless they be tolerated? Such measures would deprive society and the state of many valuable citizens it can ill afford to spare. As the law now stands in this country, reckoning the book of common prayer an episcopal authority for one long act of parliament, the exclusion from salvation falls, not only on those who deny Christianity, but on all who deny an iota of the Arian creed. They are, of course, very bad men; they must be so, as they deserve eternal punishment; and this circumstance confirms what we are told of the evil tendency of heresy and infidelity.

Our position is only, that however bad they may be, their badness is perfectly consistent with their being excellent and useful citizens, and therefore not of a description to be legally proscribed. Hume and Gibbon are damned, according to law; and yet it is to be presumed they "did the state some service," for they were allowed to dip their fingers in the public purse. There was Sir Isaac Newton, master of the Mint, and the glory of our country; there was Dr Lardner, the Presbyterian heretic, whose "credibility of the Gospel History," is a kind of theological "principle," at least in the Deistical controversy; they, too, are damned, according to law, though their names and works are of great worth in Christian orations. We should be loath to want such men as these, or any like them, though they have all said enough, in expressing their opinions, to show they will be damned, according to law. With all due deference to the government, then, or their spiritual advisers, the bench of bishops, we submit that both men and beasts, who, according to them, shall have no place in heaven, may still be far too useful on earth for the nation to wish for their extinction.

Having briefly shown the impolicy of legal penalties for unbelief in the dogmas of Christianity, for the credit and safety of Christianity itself, we shall proceed farther to argue the question in its more general bearings. It is only of late years that infidel works have been addressed to the multitude, because it is only of late that the mass of the people have begun to read. Before the French Revolution scepticism was one of the privileges of high life. Religion was reckoned a vulgar prejudice, much beneath the dignity of a gentleman, and utterly incompatible with the pretensions of a wit. The complete change of fashion which has taken place, is chiefly owing to the alarm excited by that catastrophe. Christianity has been warmly patronised, in the hope that it would keep the people quiet, teach them to pay their taxes without grumbling, and restrain them from subverting the established order of things. This naturally drew upon Christianity the suspicions of those who were most discontented and desirous of change, predisposed them to doubt or deny its truth, and prompted them to commence a theological conflict in that public arena where even the

political warfare, which already raged, was a comparative novelty. To the "Rights of Man," succeeded the "Age of Reason," and with the publication of the "Age of Reason," commenced the regular persecution of free-thinking, which has since been carried on, with but few intervals. A bookseller, named Williams, was prosecuted and convicted for publishing the first and second parts of that work in 1797, soon after its appearance, and suffered twelve months imprisonment in Cold-Bath-Fields. Daniel Isaac, Eaton, for publishing the third part in 1812, was sentenced to eighteen months imprisonment and the pillory, and in the following year escaped another sentence, by death, for the publication of "Ecco Homo," the author of which, Mr Houston, was imprisoned in Newgate, for two years, and fined two hundred pounds. In October, 1819, Carlile was tried for publishing Paine's Theological Works, and Palmer's Principles of Nature, and condemned for the first to Dorchester goal, and a fine of *one thousand pounds*; and for the second to one year's imprisonment, and a fine of five hundred pounds, and to find securities for good behaviour for life, himself in *one thousand pounds*, and two others in one hundred pounds each. His wife and sister were afterwards convicted of similar acts, and suffered heavy sentences. Upwards of thirty other persons, many of them journeymen to Mr Carlile, and the rest small booksellers, have also been subjected to fine and imprisonment in various degrees of severity. The Rev. Robert Taylor was also imprisoned and fined for lecturing against the prevailing religious opinions; and latterly we have a revival of these disgraceful prosecutions in the imprisonment for a year, and the mulcting a hundred pounds, of Charles Southwell, for the publication of an article against the bible in a periodical entitled the "Oracle of Reason," and in the present judicial victimizing of Mr Holyoake, for words spoken in the heat of debate, and in reply to a question put to him by one of the emissaries and spies of the priesthood to entrap him. The experiment of prosecution has been fairly tried, what have been the results?

In the case of the Age of Reason it was a ten-fold, perhaps we might almost say, a hundredfold increase of the circulation of this obnoxious publication. Notwithstanding the vigilance of the prosecutors, it was never difficult to obtain a copy of the proscribed book. There was always a steady, though very limited demand, sufficient to carry off a moderately sized edition in the course of a few years. In 1818 Carlile ventured to do that openly, which had been done surreptitiously. He brought out an edition of Paine's Theological Works, with all the advantages of advertisements and placards, and a previous discussion in the newspapers. The edition consisted of a thousand copies, and was completely sold off in two months—that is to say, *one hundred* in the month which elapsed before the determination to prosecute be-

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came known; and *nine* hundred in the month which followed. Now, the first month's sale of a book which had been well advertised, and which had also excited a newspaper controversy, would, in ordinary cases, be at least one-half its probable sale for a twelvemonth. Take it at one-fourth; we then owe to the prosecutions the circulation of twenty thousand copies of the *Age of Reason*; and as, among the poorer classes, there are several readers to one purchaser, it may be estimated that at least one hundred thousand have thus been led to the perusal of that work, under circumstances highly favourable to its making an impression on their minds. What confirms this ascription of this increase solely to the prosecutions is, that there has been no such demand for Paine's *Political Works*, but that a similar extension has taken place with every work that has been made the subject of prosecution, whether political or theological.

Apart from these considerations, let the abettors of these prosecutions look for a moment at the *prima facie* case which they are creating against Christianity. It is defended by the most learned, and expounded by the most eloquent men. We have an established clergy of about 18,000 educated men for its defence, and a dissenting ministry of about 8,000 more, who have thus far a common cause. Our public seminaries are universally Christian; independently of the conditions attached to public offices, the state of opinion is such, as to render avowed, or even suspected unbelief, anything but favourable to a man's progress in society. Religious periodical publications are sent forth in immense numbers;—we have bible, tract, and prayer book societies, whose annual distribution is literally reckoned by tens of thousands, hundreds of thousands, and millions. It may be reckoned, as a sample, that, in the year of Carlile's trial, the Religious Tract Society added a million and a half of tracts to its issue, which was four millions in the preceding year. The average revenue of this society was about £9,000; that of the Christian Knowledge Society, above £50,000; and that of the Bible Society, about £100,000. Now, if religion—with all this extensive aid, all these immense advantages in addition to its proper evidence—cannot stand its ground, without prosecutions for its support, it ought at once to fall—the sooner the better, for it must be false. Were it the grossest imposture that ever existed, here is force enough to enable it to fight a long and hard battle with truth and common sense. If with these fearful odds, there be the slightest occasion for penalty and imprisonment to secure its ascendancy, falsehood may be at once branded on its front. Those who contend for their infliction, are the real missionaries of infidelity, and by far its most successful propagators.

It is often said, that fair and decorous argument against Christianity ought to be allowed; but not

ribaldry, contumely, reviling, blasphemy, &c. Such language having been held in parliament, and on the bench, may be entitled to some attention. On the trial of Mrs Wright, the Lord Chief Justice is reported to have said—"The defendant was not called on to answer any reasonable or fair discussion on the truth of Christianity in general, or any of its particular tenets. The law permitted that every subject, however sacred, should be freely, yet moderately and temperately discussed; but it would not yield its protection to gross and scandalous calumnies on the established faith." And again, "If the jury thought these passages were only parts of a fair and temperate discussion of the sacred topics to which they had reference, they might acquit the defendant; but if they consider them as gross and indecent attacks on religion, they must find her guilty." Declarations to the same effect have been repeated in more recent trials. Yet, if they rightly expound the common law, it is at variance with the statute; for that of the 9th and 10th, William and Mary, enacts, "That any person having been educated in, or at any time made profession of, the Christian religion within this realm, shall, by writing, speaking, printing, teaching, or advised speaking, deny the Christian religion to be true, or the holy scriptures to be of Divine authority, he shall, &c. &c." Nay, this language is at variance to the case continually referred to, that of *Rex v. Woolston*. When the offence was not a direct denial, but an allegorical interpretation of the New Testament, which, in the opinion of Lord Raymond, "struck at the very root of Christianity," the court declared—"they would not suffer it to be debated, whether to write against Christianity in general was not an offence at common law." Notwithstanding the legal allowance of "temperate discussion" declared on Mrs Wright's trial, the same judge had declared on that of Mr Carlile, that "the court was bound *not to hear* the truth of the Christian religion questioned," and that "if the defendant wished to produce authors to show that the Christian religion *might be denied*, that could not be allowed." The charge on that trial completely proves the vacillation we are exposing. The following passages are quoted from it in the order in which they appear in the *Times* newspaper of October 15, 1819:—The Lord Chief Justice said, "That he had then, (during the defence,) determined, and he did not regret that determination, that it was not competent in a Christian court, in a court of law, to rise up and say that the Christian religion was not a religion of truth." Soon after this, he expressed himself as follows: "Another topic of defence, strenuously, and in some degree properly, urged, was the danger of restraining free discussion, and free inquiry. God forbid that any such restraint should take place! But they had to distinguish whether the present publication was an instance of that free inquiry and discussion, or a work of

mere calumny and ridicule." Again—"The Christian religion forming part of the law of the land, it was not fit that he, the defendant, or any other person, should openly deny its truth;" and, to complete the said vacillation, in the summing up he concluded thus—"The whole question turns upon the character of the work; and that must now be collected from that as a whole. Was it a fair and candid inquiry? Look at those epithets. Look at those epithets applied to the scriptures—'a book full of lies,' 'a dangerous heresy,' 'an impious falsehood.' These were a few specimens, and he found none other to soften their effect, or that indicated any other object than to defame the bible, and bring it into universal disbelief and contempt. So thinking, it was his duty, sitting where he did, to express his opinion to the jury; and that opinion was, that this publication was a work of calumny and scoffing, and therefore an unlawful publication." We say nothing of the legal trap in which a defendant might complain of being caught, if he acted upon one set of dicta and were condemned by the other. We say nothing of the disingenuousness of claiming merit for tolerating opinion, while there is a prospect of obtaining a conviction on the score of calumny, and still retaining as a *dernier resort* the *illegality of everything* which tends to the disproof of Christianity. Our object is merely to point out the inconsistency and mistiness of the language held by the highest authorities on this subject, and our inference is, that the line between argument and reviling is too difficult even for legal acuteness to draw; that he who disbelieves and attempts to disprove Christianity, can put forth his arguments into no form which may not be pronounced calumnious and illegal, and that, therefore, the only mode of securing free inquiry from that restraint, at the bare idea of which his lordship was so loudly and piously horror stricken, is to tolerate the one as well as the other. A conclusion which, as it may not be generally agreeable we proceed to strengthen by other considerations.

To declare that an act is legal, but with the proviso that it be performed in a gentle and decorous manner, is opening a wide door for arbitrary discretion on the one part, and dissatisfaction on the other. The difficulty is greatly increased when the act itself is offensive to those that sit in judgment upon the manner of its performance. Suppose that it were made expulsion from the House of Commons to address the chair ungracefully—what a clamour would there be for the unconditional allowance or prohibition of speech? Could the distinction be accurately sustained and ascertained, it would still be hard to debar the man of ungainly habits from doing that which he might think required of him by his duty to his constituents and his country. But it is infinitely more unjust to debar a man, who may have a comprehensive and vigorous, though a coarse and vulgar

mind, from publishing his speculations on theological topics, because his style partakes of his own rudeness, and lacks the polish of that of Hume or Gibbon. If the proposition that Christianity is untrue be legally conveyed to the mind, what can be more absurd than to say, that to express that by certain undefined and undefinable selections of terms shall constitute a crime?

So far as we can understand, the distinction set up in this case between discussing and reviling it seems to be this: the one is a mere statement of a fact or argument; the other the expression of the indignation or contempt, excited in the writer's mind by the doctrine to which he is opposed. Now, the reason why men dislike doctrines is, that they discern, or fancy they discern, an evil tendency in these doctrines. If such a tendency be demonstrated to the conviction of the reader, he will participate in the writer's dislike, whether the latter have expressed it or not. And if the writer be not so convinced, all that the writer says of his own dislike will go for nothing, or more probably make both himself and his argument disagreeable. It is surely inexpedient that such an appendage should constitute all the difference between crime and no crime, the enjoyment of the common rights of citizenship, and a ruinous sentence of fine and imprisonment; and the more so, on the account of the extreme difficulty of avoiding some expression of feeling in the discussion of moral subjects. There is no mathematical indifference in theological controversy. The believer has it not; nor ought he to exact it of the unbeliever. The expression of indignation at what is deemed false and pernicious, should be a crime in all or in none.

The Unitarians have been described by a Protestant Bishop as "God denying apostates and heretics," "blasphemers," "not entitled to the name of Christian," who "wilfully falsify the truth." The Book of Homilies, the yet authoritative manifesto of the Church of England, describes the Catholic worship as far exceeding Gentile idolatry "in all wickedness, foolishness, and madness;" characterises its practice as "the blasphemous bold blazing of manifest idolatry;" and wonders that its votaries should not "at the least choose a time of more darkness, as meet to utter their horrible blasphemies in."—(Against the Evil of Idolatry, part 3.) Christian blasphemers, then, are tolerated; as is Christian reviling. Let justice be even handed.

Where the feelings are so deeply interested as they always must be on theological subjects, it will necessarily happen that the party attacked will call that reviling which the party attacking will deem fair discussion. In a debate on the presentation of a petition against the prosecution of unbelievers, July 1, 1823, Mr Wilberforce observed that "he entirely denied the truth of the argument which the honourable member (Mr

Hume) had drawn from the employment of missionaries abroad. Those individuals never proceeded to insult the prejudices of the natives of other countries by any gross and indecent reflections. They adduced nothing but fair and sober argument to effect their purpose." Now, what is the opinion of the Hindoos respecting these temperate and unimpeachable reasoners? In the first No. of the *Braminical Magazine*, published at Calcutta in 1821, in both Bengalee and English, is the following account of them: "During the last twenty years a body of English gentlemen, who are called missionaries, have been publicly endeavouring in several ways to convert the Hindoos and Mussulmans to Christianity. The first way is that of publishing and distributing among the natives various books, large and small, *reviling both religions*, and abusing and *ridiculing the gods and saints of the former*." Yet Mr Wilberforce, viewing these proceedings from a prejudiced point of view, calls this "fair and sober argument," and denies to the unbeliever at home that privilege which he concedes to the missionary abroad.

But censure and abuse, however justly directed, are sure commonly to rouse indignant feelings, and hence are less fatal to the orthodox creed than fair dispassionate argument. The more abusive an unbeliever is, the less likely is he to make an impression, even on the most uninformed. If unable to judge of the controversy in any other way, they will decide on the same principle as the honest countryman, who was present at a disputation in Latin, and knew which of the disputants had the worst of it, by his falling into a passion. Indeed, in proportion to want of information is generally the disposition to resent any attack upon opinions which are held in reverence. That disposition is sufficiently strong in all to make every appearance of insult operate as a deduction from the force of the argument with which it is blended. To allow the publication of infidel works, cleansed of passages which are liable to that imputation, especially while Christian works undergo no such expurgatory process, would obviously place unbelief in a far more advantageous position than it now occupies. So to contrive, that in any controversy, all the writers on one side should publish only the pure effusions of intellect, thoroughly weeded of all indications of human frailty, of prejudice and passion, of misrepresentations, acrimony, and reviling, would be to give them a most preponderating advantage; and if Christians were not blind with prejudice, and bitter and vindictive with the gall of uncharitableness, they would apprehend at once the suicidal folly of such prosecutions.

A libel is a crime, because it tends to a breach of the peace. With personal libels this may be the case, but there is something preposterous in applying this position to theological discussions.

Who is likely to be instigated to outrage by the publication of the "Age of Reason," or any other freethinking publication? Was it ever apprehended that any of our bishops, priests, or deacons would call out Mr Carhile, or any other infidel writer or publisher at Chalk Farm, to fight a duel? or is the danger on the other side from converts? If so, it can only be aggravated by proceedings which tend to increase their numbers, and inspire them with the zeal and hatred of a sect persecuted for its opinions. Tendencies are best illustrated by facts.—The circulation of liberal anti-theological works has been going on increasing yearly since 1819, and yet the country has not since been more disturbed than before, nor have we heard of breaches of the peace actually traced to their influence; were it so, government is quite strong enough to keep the peace without resorting to the highly reprehensible means of prosecution for opinions.

The grand argument of the prosecutors is, that such means are necessary to protect the poor and ignorant, a point which, we believe, has already been successfully refuted. If the effect of such prosecutions be to excite sympathy with the persons, and give increased circulation to the works prosecuted—if the poor have that ability to judge which is implied in the enlarged supply of religious publications for their use—if the clergy, established and non-established, have any tolerable portion of that zeal, talent, and respectability of character which is supposed, in order to justify the expenditure of supporting their profession—if the poor and ignorant be not less likely than others to be irritated by the language of insult towards their opinions, and soothed by that of respect, then are the prosecutions not necessary for their defence; nor do they act as a defence at all, but, on the contrary, multiply existing perils and create new ones. If fears still remain, give them education; let them have it as rapidly and extensively as possible. Every body allows there is no danger from the educated class; let there, then, be no other class. But at the same time that popular education holds forth a pledge of the triumph over error, the redemption of that pledge can only be postponed and impeded by the suppression of free discussion. To give the one and attempt, by legal violence, to withhold the other—to enlighten, and yet continue to treat them as if they were in the grossest ignorance, must infallibly make matters worse. When the appetite of knowledge is excited, to refuse its gratification is most perilous. We quote an excellent extract on this point from Mr Bailey's *Essays on the Formation and Publication of Opinions*—"The universal education of the poor, which no earthly power can prevent, although it may retard it is loudly demanded by the united voices of the moralist and the politician. But if the people are enlightened at all, it is unavailing and inconsistent to resort to half measures

and timid expedients; to treat them at once as men and as children, to endow them with the power of thinking, and at the same time to fetter its exercise—to make an appeal to their reason, and yet to distrust its result—to give them the stomach of a lion, and feed them with the aliment of a lamb. The promoters of the universal education of the poor ought to be aware that they are setting in motion, or at least accelerating the action, of an engine too powerful to be controlled at their pleasure, and likely to prove fatal to all those parts of their own systems, which rest not in the solid foundations of reality. They ought to know that they are necessarily giving birth to a great deal of doubt and investigation—that they are undermining the power of prejudice, and the influence of mere authority and prescription—that they are creating an immense number of keen inquirers and original thinkers, whose intellectual force will be turned, in the first instance, upon those subjects which are dearest to the heart, and of most importance to society.”

Independently of the vagueness of the law itself under which unbelievers have been tried, (which law seems to be nothing more than inference from the fact, that several judges have declared Christianity to be a parcel of the common law,) there have been various circumstances attending its enforcement, which were ill adapted to promote the advanced object. Arguments for the truth, and panegyrics on the excellence of a system of religion, do not read pleasantly in a trial, during which the accused is authoritatively silenced should he attempt their refutation, and afterwards severely punished by a prejudiced jury, hounded in by a bigoted judge. Is this a process either to make him or others admire the benignant spirit of that religion whose name is connected with the prosecution? This man's moral character, be it remembered, may be wholly unimpeached, and unimpeachable. His sole offence is the publication of his opinions on Christianity, or publishing those of other men; it may be in an abusive, in an ineffective manner, and which nobody is compelled to read. Why, according to the usual treatment of offenders, Carlile, Southwell, and others that have similarly treated this, might have revelled in crime for their amount of punishment. Any one of them might have debauched half the ladies' boarding schools in London by the introduction of obscene pictures, committed wholesale adultery, might have practised cheating and robbery in twenty different forms, or have been repeatedly guilty of manslaughter, if the circumstances were not of a very aggravated description; in short, have been that nuisance to society which divines say unbelief tends to produce, but which, if it be produced, is easily and effectively suppressed by the legislature, whose powers are vainly or mischievously exerted against mere opinion.

To this phrase, so frequently quoted,—that

Christianity is part and parcel of the law of England, it is difficult, if not impossible, to affix any definite meaning. We can make no sense of it, but what is fatal to the purpose for which it is repeated. Christianity consists of facts, doctrines, and precepts. A profession of belief in the divine authority of the whole may be made part of a code; but unless belief were a voluntary act, or falsehood a Christian duty, such an enactment would be rather the exclusion than the incorporation of Christianity. Legal authority may be conferred upon its precepts, at least so far as they relate to actions. But Carlile, stripped of his property, and after three years of confinement having expired, kept there till he had paid £1,500—or Southwell, imprisoned for a year, and fined in £100 for a similar offence, is rather a singular comment upon doing as we would be done by.

That Christians, the founder of whose religion was tried and executed for blasphemy, his own words during the trial being pronounced sufficient evidence against him by his sacerdotal judge—Christians, whose prophetic books are full of sarcasm on the gods and worship of the mightiest empires—Christians, who boast a long array of martyrs, whose lives were the penalty of their avowed departure from the religion of their country—Christians, whose missionaries are striving in every region of the earth to bring other religions into disbelief and contempt—Christians, Protestants—Christians, whose reformers perished in the dungeons, or at the stake as heretics, apostates, and blasphemers—that they, having got the power to which they were so long victims, should employ it in the self-same way, and strive to crush the opposition of opinion, or of passion even, by vindictive persecution, is most monstrous. The disgrace is felt even by those who employ these despicable and worthless means of crushing the opinions of their fellows; and the time must soon be, when such unwarrantable means of supporting the popular faith will be entirely abandoned. Truth can alone be elicited by free discussion. Falsehood alone requires legal penalties and coercion to keep it in existence; and no more convincing argument could be found that religion in this country is a system of fraud and imposition, than the dread which its supporters exhibit towards free inquiry, and their continual appeals to the “strong arm of the law” to stem the progress of “infidelity.” As Paine truly remarks, “He that is afraid of free discussion, is more in love with his own opinions than with truth.” Or, as the poet and patriot of the commonwealth well expresses it—“Let truth and falsehood grapple together: who ever heard truth put to the route in a free and open encounter?” Free discussion is the basis of all sound, moral, social, and political progress—the lever by which to elevate and improve the world.

FREE-THINKERS' INFORMATION FOR THE PEOPLE.

PERSECUTION.

I will not call Dioclesian a persecutor, for he protected the christians for eighteen years; and if, during his latter days, he did not save them from the resentment of Galerius, he only furnished the example of a prince seduced, like many others, by intrigue and cabal, into a conduct unworthy of his character.

I will still less give the name of persecutor to Trajan or Antoninus. I should regard myself as uttering blasphemy. What is a persecutor? He whose wounded pride and fanaticism irritate princes and magistrates into fury against innocent men, whose only crime is that of being of a different opinion. Impudent man! thou hast worshipped God: thou hast preached and practised virtue: thou hast served and assisted man; thou hast protected the orphan, hast succoured the poor; thou hast changed deserts, in which slaves dragged on a miserable existence, into fertile districts peopled with happy families; but I have discovered that thou despisest me, and has never read my controversial work. I will therefore seek the confessor of the prime minister, or the magistrate; I will show them, with outstretched neck and twisted mouth, that thou holdest an erroneous opinion in relation to the cells in which the septuagint was studied; thou hast even spoken disrespectfully for these ten years past of Tobit's dog, which thou assertest to have been a spaniel, whilst I maintain that it was a greyhound. I will denounce thee as the enemy of God and man! Such is the language of the persecutor; and if these words do not precisely issue from his lips, they are engraven on his heart with the graver of fanaticism steeped in the gall of envy.

It was thus that the Jesuit le Tellier dared to persecute Cardinal de Noailles, and that Jurieu persecuted Bayle.

When the persecution of the protestants commenced in Frauce, it was not Francis I. nor Henry II. nor Francis II. who sought out these unfortunate people, who hardened themselves against them with reflective bitterness, and who delivered them to the flames in the spirit of vengeance. Francis I. was too much engaged with the duchess D'Etampes; Henry II. with his ancient Diaua, and Francis II. was too much a child. Who, then, commenced these persecutions? Jealous priests, who enlisted in their service the prejudices of magistrates and the policy of ministers.

If these monarchs had not been deceived, if they had foreseen that these persecutions would produce half a century of civil war, and that the two parts of the nation would mutually exterminate each other, they would have extinguished with their tears the first piles which they allowed to be lighted.

Oh, God of mercy! If any man can resemble that malignant being who is described as actually employed in the destruction of thy works, is it not the persecutor?—*Voltaire*.

In looking forward to future life, let us recollect that we not have to sustain all its toil, to endure all its sufferings, or encounter all its crossings at once. One moment comes laden with its own little burthens, then flies, and is succeeded by another no heavier than the last; if one could be borne, so can another, and another.

According to Butler and other Romish writers, "the title of the mother of God was confirmed to the Virgin Mary" by the traditions of their church and her nativity has been kept "above a thousand years," with matins, masses, homilies, collects, processions, and other forms and ceremonies ordained by that hierarchy. Some of its writers "attribute the institution of this feast to certain revelations which a religious contemplative had; who, they say, every year upon the 8th of September, heard most sweet music in heaven, with great rejoicings of the angels; and once asking one of them the cause, he answered him, that upon that day was celebrated in heaven the nativity of the mother of God; and upon the relation of this man, the church began to celebrate it on earth."

There is but one morality, M. le Beau, as there is but one geometry. But you will tell me that the greater part of mankind are ignorant of geometry. True; but if they apply a little to the study of it, all men draw the same conclusions. Agriculturists, manufacturers, artizans, do not go through a regular course of morality; they read neither the *De Finibus* of Cicero, or the *Ethics* of Aristotle; but as soon as they reflect, they are, without knowing it, disciples of Cicero. The Indian dyer, the Tartarian shepherd, and the English seaman, are acquainted with justice and injustice. Confusius did not invent a system of morals as men construct physical systems; he found his in the hearts of all mankind. There is no morality in superstition; it exists not in ceremonies, and has nothing to do with dogmas. We cannot repeat too frequently, that dogmas differ, but that morality is the same among all men who make use of their reason.—*Voltaire*.

The Laws of England have been the subject of eulogy to many sagacious and learned men. I find them often dilatory, often uncertain, often contradictory, often cruel, often ruinous. Whenever they find a man down they keep him so, and the more pertinaciously the more earnestly he appeals to them. Like tilers, in mending one hole they always make another. Law has become in England not only the most expensive, but the most rapacious and dishonest of trades.—*Landor*.

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FREE-THINKERS' INFORMATION FOR THE PEOPLE.

"LET ALL HAVE FULL LIBERTY TO TEACH AND MAINTAIN WHATEVER OPINIONS THEY
MAY CHOOSE."—*Melancthon.*

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ON THE PRINCIPLE OF UNIVERSAL TOLERATION IN RELIGION.

IN our last number we discussed, at considerable length, the right of Free Discussion, and the impolicy of Religious Prosecutions. As a farther addition to the argument there pursued, we purpose, in the present number, to present our readers with the opinions, on the subject of Religious Toleration, of the most eminent men of modern times, so as to put them in possession of the best information obtainable on this highly important and exciting subject. No higher or more learned authorities can be cited than Hume, Gibbon, Voltaire, Priestley, Helvetius, and Raynal: and what they have thought and written on the subject will form the subject matter of the present number.

REASONS FOR TOLERATION, AND DANGEROUS CONSEQUENCES OF PERSECUTION.

The practice of persecution is the scandal of all religion; and the theological animosity, so fierce and violent, far from being an argument of men's conviction in their opposite tenets, is a certain proof of the contrary; and they have never reached any serious persuasion with regard to these remote and sublime subjects.—Even those who are the most impatient of contradiction in other controversies, are mild and moderate in comparison of polemical divines; and wherever a man's knowledge and experience give him a perfect assurance of his own opinion, he regards with contempt, rather than anger, the opposition and mistakes of others. But while men zealously maintain what they neither clearly comprehend, nor entirely believe, they are shaken in their imagined faith by the opposite persuasion or even doubts of other men; and vent on their antagonists that impatience which is the natural result of so disagreeable a state of the understanding. They then embrace easily any pretence for representing opponents as impious and profane; and if they can also find a colour for connecting this violence with the interests of civil government, they can no longer be restrained from giving uncontrouled scope to vengeance and resentment. But surely never enterprise was more unfortunate than that of founding persecution on policy, or endeavouring, for the sake of peace, to settle an entire uniformity of

opinion, in questions which, of all others, are least subjected to the criterion of human reason. The universal and uncontradicted prevalence of one opinion in religious subjects, can only be owing at first to the stupid ignorance and barbarism of the people, who never indulge themselves in any speculation and inquiry; and there is no other expedient for maintaining that uniformity, so fondly sought after, but by banishing for ever all curiosity and all improvement in science and cultivation. It may not appear, indeed, difficult to check, by a steady severity, the first beginning of controversy; but besides that this policy exposes for ever the people to all the abject terrors of superstition, and the magistrate to the endless encroachments of ecclesiastics, it also renders men so delicate, that they can never endure to hear of opposition; and they will sometimes pay dearly for that false tranquillity in which they have been so long indulged. As healthful bodies are ruined by too nice a regimen, and are thereby rendered incapable of bearing the unavoidable incidents of human life, a people who never were allowed to imagine that their principles could be contested, fly out into the most outrageous violence when any event (and such events are common) produces a faction among their clergy, and gives rise to any difference in tenet or opinion. But whatever may be said in favour of suppressing, by persecution, the first beginnings of heresy, no solid argument can be alleged for extending severity towards multitudes, or endeavouring, by capital punishments, to extirpate an opinion which has diffused itself through men of every rank and station. Besides the extreme barbarity of such an attempt, it proves commonly ineffectual to the purpose intended; and serves only to make men more obstinate in their persuasion, and to increase the number of their proselytes. The melancholy with which the fear of death, torture, and persecution inspires the sectaries, is the proper disposition for fostering religious zeal: the prospect of eternal rewards, when brought near, overpowers the dread of eternal punishments: the glory of martyrdom stimulates all the more furious zealots, especially the leaders and preachers: where a violent animosity is excited by oppression, men pass naturally from

hating the persons of their tyrants, to a more violent abhorrence of their doctrines: and the spectators, moved with pity towards these supposed martyrs, are naturally seduced to embrace those principles which can inspire men with a constancy that appears almost supernatural. Open the door to toleration, the mutual hatred relaxes among the sectaries; their attachment to their particular religion decays; the common occupations and pleasures of life succeed to the acrimony of disputation; and the same man who, in other circumstances, would have braved flames and tortures, is engaged to change his religion from the smallest prospect of favour and advancement, or even the frivolous hopes of becoming more fashionable in his principles. If any exception can be admitted to this maxim of toleration, it will only be where a theology altogether new, novise connected with the ancient religion of the state, is imported from foreign countries, and may easily, at one blow, be eradicated without leaving the seeds of future innovations. But as this instance would involve some apology for the ancient Pagan persecutions, or for the extirpation of Christianity in China and Japan; it ought surely, on account of this detested consequence, to be rather buried in eternal silence and oblivion, especially as no human depravity can equal revenge and cruelty covered with the mantle of religion.

Though these arguments appear entirely satisfactory, yet such is the subtlety of human wit, that the enemies to toleration are not reduced to silence; and they still find topics on which to maintain the controversy. The doctrine, say they, of liberty of conscience, is founded on the most flagrant impiety, and supposes such an indifference among all religions, such an obscurity in theological doctrines as to render the church and magistrate incapable of distinguishing, with certainty, the dictates of heaven from the mere fictitious of human imagination. If the divinity reveals principles to mankind, he will surely give a criterion by which they may be ascertained; and a prince, who knowingly allows these principles to be perverted or adulterated, is infinitely more criminal than if he gave permission for the vending of poison, under the shape of food to all his subjects. Persecution may, indeed, seem better calculated to make hypocrites than converts; but experience teaches us, that the habits of hypocrisy often turn into reality; and the children, at least, ignorant of the civilisation of their parents, may happily be educated in more orthodox tenets. It is absurd, in opposition to considerations of such unspeakable importance, to plead the temperate and frivolous interests of civil society; and if matters be thoroughly examined, even that topic will not appear so universally certain in favour of toleration as by some it is represented. Where sects arise, whose fundamental principle on all sides is to execrate, and abhor, and damn, and extirpate each other, what choice has the magistrate left but to

take part, and by rendering one sect entirely prevalent, restore, at least for a time, the public tranquillity? The political body, being here sickly, must not be treated as if it were in a state of sound health; and an affected neutrality in the prince, or even a cool preference, may serve only to encourage the hopes of all the sects, and keep alive their animosity. The Protestants, far from tolerating the religion of their ancestors, regard it as an impious and detestable idolatry; and during the late minority, when they were entirely masters, they enacted very severe, though not capital, punishments against all exercises of the Catholic worship, and even against such as barely abstained from their profane rites and sacraments. Nor are instances wanting of their endcavours to secure an imagined orthodoxy by the most rigorous excutions: Calvin has burned Servetus at Geneva; Cranmer brought Arians and Anabaptists to the stake. And if persecution of any kind be admitted, the most bloody and violent will surely be allowed the most justifiable, as the most effectual. Imprisonments, fines, confiscations, whippings, serve only to irritate the sects, without disabling them from resistance; but the stake, the wheel, and the gibbet must soon terminate in the extirpation or banishment of all the heretics inclined to give disturbance, and in the entire silence and submission of the rest.

In all ages, not wholly excepting even those of Greece and Rome, religious sects and heresies and schisms had been esteemed dangerous, if not pernicious to civil government, and were regarded as the source of faction, and private combination, and opposition to the laws. The magistrate therefore applied himself directly to the cure of this evil, as of every other; and very naturally attempted, by penal statutes, to suppress those separate communities, and punish the obstinate innovators: But it was found by fatal experience, and after spilling an ocean of blood in those theological quarrels, that the evil was of a peculiar nature, and was both inflamed by violent remedies, and diffused itself more rapidly throughout the whole society. Hence, though late, arose the paradoxical principle and salutary practice of toleration.

The liberty of the press was incompatible with such maxims and such principles of government as then prevailed; and was therefore quite unknown in that age. Besides employing the two terrible courts of star-chamber and high commission, whose powers were unlimited, Queen Elizabeth exerted her authority by restraints upon the press. She passed a decree in her court of star-chamber, that is, by her own will and pleasure, forbidding any book to be printed in any place but in London, Oxford, and Cambridge; and another, in which she prohibited, under severe penalties, the publishing of any book or pamphlet "against the form or meaning of any restraint or ordinance, contained, or to be contained, in any statute or laws of this

realm, or in any injunction made or set forth by her Majesty or her privy-council, or against the true sense or meaning of any letters patent, commissions, or prohibitions under the great seal of England." James extended the same penalties to the importing of such books from abroad. And to render these edicts more effectual, he afterwards inhibited the printing of any book without a license from the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Archbishop of York, the Bishop of London, or the Vice-chancellor of one of the universities, or of some person appointed by them.

In tracing the coherence among the systems of modern theology, we may observe, that the doctrine of absolute decrees has ever been intimately connected with the enthusiastic spirit; as that doctrine affords the highest subject of joy, triumph, and security, to the supposed elect, and exalts them, by infinite degrees, above the rest of mankind. All the first reformers adopted these principles; and the Jansenists too, a fanatical sect in France, not to mention the Mahometans in Asia, have ever embraced them. As the Lutheran establishments were subjected to episcopal jurisdiction, their enthusiastic genius gradually decayed, and men had leisure to perceive the absurdity of supposing God to punish, by infinite torments, what he himself from all eternity had unchangeably decreed. The king, though at this time his Calvinistic education had rivetted him in the doctrine of absolute decrees; yet, being a zealous partizan of episcopacy, was insensibly engaged, towards the end of his reign, to favour the milder theology of Arminius. Even in so great a doctor the genius of the religion prevailed over its speculative tenets; and with him the whole clergy gradually dropped the more rigid principles of absolute reprobation and unconditional decrees. Some noise was at first made about these innovations; but being drowned in the fury of factions and civil wars which ensued, the scholastic arguments made an insignificant figure amidst those violent disputes about civil and ecclesiastical power, with which the nation was agitated. And at the restoration, the church, though she still retained her old subscriptions and articles of faith, was found to have totally changed her speculative doctrines, and to have embraced tenets more suitable to the genius of her discipline and worship, without its being possible to assign the precise period in which the alteration was produced.—*Hume.*

WHAT IS TOLERATION?

It is a privilege to which human nature is entitled: we are all made up of weakness and errors; it therefore behoves us mutually to forgive one another's follies. This is the very first law of nature.

Though the Guebre, the Banian, the Jew, the Mahometan, the lettered Chinese, the Greek, the

Roman Catholic, the Quaker, traffic together on the Exchange of Amsterdam, London, Surat, or Bassora, they will never offer to lift up a poniard against each other to gain proselytes; wherefore, then, since the first council of Nice, have we been almost continually cutting each other's throats?

Constantine began with issuing an edict allowing the exercise of all religions, and some time after turned persecutor. Before him, all the severe treatment of the Christians proceeded purely from their beginning to make a party in the state. The Romans permitted every kind of worship, even of the Jews and Egyptians, both which they so very much despised. How, then, came Rome to tolerate these forms? It was because neither the Egyptians nor the Jews themselves went about to exterminate the ancient religion of the empire; they did not cross seas and lands to make proselytes; the getting of money was all they minded: whereas, it is indisputable, that the Christians could not be easy unless their religion bore the sway. The Jews were disgusted at the statue of Jupiter being set up at Jerusalem; but the Christians would not so much as allow it to be in the Capitol of Rome. St Thomas candidly owns, that it was only for want of power that the Christians did not dethrone the emperors: they held that all the world ought to embrace their religion: this, of course, made them enemies to all the world till its happy conversion.

Their controversial points likewise set them at enmity one against another concerning the divinity of Christ; they who denied it were anathematised as Ebionites; and these anathematised the worshippers of Jesus.

If some would have all goods to be in common, as they alleged was the custom in the apostles' time, their adversaries call them Nicolaitans, and accuse them of the most horrid crimes. If others set up for a mystical devotion, they are branded with the appellation of Gnostics, and opposed with extreme vehemence and severity. Marcion, for disputing on the Trinity, got the name of an idolater.

Tertullian, Praxeas, Origen, Novatus, Novatianus, Sabbellus, and Donatus, were all persecuted by their bretheren before Constantine's time; and no sooner had Constantine established the Christian religion, than the Athanasians and Eusebians fell foul of one another; and ever since, down to our times, the Christian Church has been deluged with blood.

The Jewish people were, I own, extremely barbarous and merciless, massacring all the inhabitants of a little wretched country, to which they had no more right than their vile descendants have to Paris or London. However, when Naaman is cured of his leprosy by dipping seven times in the river Jordan, and by way of expressing his gratitude to Elisha, from whom he had the secret of that easy cure, he tells to him that he will worship the God of the Jews, he yet reserves to him-

self the liberty to worship his sovereign's God likewise; and asks Elisha's leave, which the prophet readily grants. The Jews worshipped their God; but never were offended at, or so much as thought it strange, that every nation had its own deity. They acquiesced in Chamo's giving a tract of land to the Moabites, provided they would let them quietly enjoy what they held from their God. Jacob made no difficulty of marrying an idolater's daughter; for Laban had another kind of God than he whom Jacob worshipped. These are instances of toleration among the most haughty, most obstinate, and most cruel people of all antiquity; and we, overlooking what little indulgence was among them, have imitated only their sanguinary rancour.

Every individual persecuting another for not being of his opinion is a monster; this is evident beyond all dispute: but the government! men in power, princes! how are they to deal with those of a different worship from theirs? If foreigners and powerful, it is certain princes will not disdain entering into an alliance with them. Francis I. though his Most Christian Majesty, unites with the Mussulmen against Charles V. likewise a Most Christian Monarch. Francis supplies the German Lutherans with money to support their revolt against the Emperor; but, according to custom, burns them in his own country. Thus, from policy he pays them in Saxony; and from policy makes bonfires of them at Paris. But what was the consequence? Persecution ever makes proselytes. France came to swarm with new Protestants, who, at first quietly submitted to be hanged, and afterwards hung others; civil wars came on, and St Bartholomew's day, or the massacre of Paris crowned all. Thus, this corner of the world became worse than all that ever the ancients or moderns have said of hell.

Ye fools! never to pay a proper worship to the God who made you! wretches, on whom the example of the Noachides, the lettered Chinese, the Perses, and all wise men, have had no influence! Monsters! to whom superstitions are as necessary as carrion to crows! You have been already told it, and I have nothing else to tell you; whilst you have but two religions among you, they will be ever at daggers drawing; if you have thirty, they will live quietly. Turn your eyes to the Grand Seigneur; he has among his subjects Guebres, Baniars, Greeks, Latins, Christians, and Nestorians. Whoever goes about to raise any disturbance is surely impaled, and thus all live in peace and quietness.

Martyrs are productive of proselytes. The execution of a person of that character made more Protestants than Calvin's Institutes. The sixth part of France were Calvinists under Francis II. as one third of Germany, at least, were Lutherans under Charles V.

There remained only one right way to act;—which was, to imitate the example of Charles V.

who, after a series of wars, concluded at length with granting liberty of conscience; and that of Queen Elizabeth, who maintained the established religion, but allowed every body to worship God their own way, provided they behaved as peaceable subjects.

This is the maxim now observed in all those countries heretofore ravaged by religious wars, after having been convinced by repeated, though too fatal experiments, of the rectitude of this measure.

But, before this measure can be pursued, the laws must be in force, and the fury of parties must begin to subside. France was nothing but one continual scene of sanguinary factions from the reign of Francis I. to the happy days of Henry the Great. In those licentious times the laws were trampled upon, and even when the civil wars were at an end, fanaticism survived, and assassinated this monarch, in the bosom of peace, by the hand of a madman, a visionary let loose from a cloister.—*Voltaire.*

BENEFITS OF FULL TOLERATION.

Governments are the judges of actions, and not of opinions. If faith be a gift of Heaven, they who have it not, deserve to be pitied—not punished. It is the excess of inhumanity to persecute an unfortunate person. If I advance a gross error, I am punished by ridicule and contempt; but if, in consequence of an erroneous opinion, I attempt to violate the liberty of other people, it is then I become criminal. If, being a devout adorer of Venus, I burn the temple of Serapis, the magistrate ought to punish me; not as a heretic, but as a disturber of public peace; as a man unjust, who being free in the exercise of my own worship, would deprive my fellow-citizens of the liberty I enjoy myself. Wherever several religions and several sects are tolerated, they become insensibly habituated to each other; their zeal loses every day something of its acrimony. Where a full toleration is established there are few fanatics.—*Helvetius.*

DANGER OF PERSECUTING OPINIONS.

It is universally true, that where the magistrate has the greatest pretence for interfering in religious and moral principles, his interference (supposing there was no impropriety in it) is the least necessary. If the opinions and principles in question be evidently subversive of all religion and society, they must be evidently false and easy to refute; so that there can be no danger of their spreading, and the patrons of them may safely be suffered to maintain them in the most open manner they choose. Persecution may procure friends to any cause, and perhaps to this; but hardly any thing else can do it. It is a fact, that there are more Atheists and Infidels of all kinds in Roman

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Catholic states, where religion is so well guarded, than in England. If ever arbitrary power should gain ground in England, it will be by means of the seeming necessity of having recourse to illegal methods in order to come at opinions, or persons, generally obnoxious: but when these illegal practices have once been authorised, and have passed into precedents, all persons, and all opinions, will lie at the mercy of the minister, who will animadvert upon whatever gives him umbrage. This is the method in which despotism has generally been introduced, and is well known to have been the method used by the thirty tyrants at Athens. They first cut off persons the most generally obnoxious and such as the laws could not reach; and that intelligent people were not aware, that the very same methods might be employed to take off the worst men in the city. Such is the connection and gradation of opinions, that if once we admit there are some which ought to be guarded by civil penalties, it will ever be impossible to distinguish, to general satisfaction, between those which may be tolerated, and those which may not: But a happy circumstance it is for human society, that in religion and morals, there is no necessity to distinguish them at all; the more important will guard themselves by their own evidence, and the less important do not deserve to be guarded. In all modes of religion which subsist among mankind, however subversive of virtue they may be in theory, there is some salvo for good morals; so that, in fact, they enforce the more essential parts, at least, of that conduct which the good order of society requires. When, under pretence of conscience, men disturb the peace of society, and are guilty of a breach of the laws, they ought to be restrained by the civil magistrate. If a man commit murder, let him be punished as a murderer, and let no regard be paid to the plea of conscience for committing the act, but let not the opinion which led to the act be meddled with.—*Priscilly.*

THE TOLERATION OF CHRISTIANITY.

If we look back into history for the character of the present sects of Christianity, we shall find few that have not in their turns been persecutors and complainers of persecution. The primitive Christians thought persecution extremely wrong in the Pagans, but practised it on one another. The first Protestants of the church of England blamed persecution in the Romish church, but practised it against the Puritans: these found it wrong in the bishops, but fell into the same practice both at home and in New England. To account for this, we should remember that the doctrine of toleration was not then known, or had not prevailed in the world. Persecution was not therefore so much the fault of the sects as of the times. It was not in those days deemed wrong in itself. The general opinion was only, that those who are in an error ought not to persecute the truth; but

the possessors of truth were in the right to persecute error, in order to destroy it. Thus, every sect, believing itself possessed of all truth, and that every tenet differing from theirs was error, conceived, that when the power was in their hands, persecution was a duty required of them by that God whom they supposed to be offended by heresy. By degrees, more moderate, and more modest sentiments, have taken place in the Christian world; and among Protestants particularly, all disclaim persecution, none vindicate it, and few practice it.* Toleration in religion, though obvious to common understanding, was not, however, the production of reason, but of commerce. The advantage of toleration for promoting commerce was discovered long before by the Portuguese. They were too zealous Catholics to venture so bold a measure in Portugal, but it was permitted in Goa: and the inquisition in that town was confined to Roman Catholics.—*Franklin.*

THE UNIVERSAL SPIRIT OF TOLERATION IN ANCIENT ROME.

The policy of the emperors and the senate of Rome, as far as it concerned religions, was happily seconded by the reflections of the enlightened, and by the habits of the superstitious part of their subjects. The various modes of worship which prevailed in the Roman world, were all considered by the people as equally true; by the philosopher as equally false; and by the magistrate as equally useful; and thus toleration produced not only mutual indulgence, but even religious concord. The superstition of the people was not embittered by any mixture of theological rancour, nor was it confined by the chains of any speculative system. The devout Polytheist, though fondly attached to his national rights, admitted, with implicit faith, the different religions of the earth. Fear, gratitude, and curiosity, a dream, or an omen, a singular disorder, or a distant journey, perpetually disposed him to multiply the articles of his belief, and to enlarge the list of his protectors. The thin texture of the Pagan mythology was interwoven with various but not discordant materials. As soon as it was allowed that sages and heroes, who had lived or who had died for the benefit of their country, were exalted to a state of power and immortality, it was universally confessed that they deserved, if not the adoration, at least the reverence of mankind. The deities of a thousand groves, and a thousand streams, possessed, in peace, their local and respective influence; nor could the Roman who deprecated the wrath of the Tiber, deride the Egyptian who presented his offering to

* Had Franklin lived in this country, and at the present day, he would have found that the spirit of Protestantism is just as persecuting as Popery, only restrained by a more improved public opinion—"the snake though scotched, is not killed."

the beneficent genius of the Nile. The visible powers of nature, the planets and the elements, were the same throughout the universe. The invisible governors of the moral world were inevitably cast in a similar mould of fiction and allegory. Every virtue, and even vice acquired its divine representative; every art and profession its patron, whose attributes, in the most distant ages and countries, were uniformly derived from the character of their peculiar votaries. A republic of gods of such opposite tempers and interests required in every system, the moderating hand of a supreme magistrate; who, by the progress of knowledge and flattery, was gradually invested with the sublime perfections of an eternal parent and an omnipotent monarch. Such was the mild spirit of antiquity, that the nations were less attentive to the difference, than to the resemblance, of their religious worship. The Greek, the Roman, and the Barbarian, as they met before their respective altars, easily persuaded themselves, that under various names, and with various ceremonies, they adored the same deities. The elegant mythology of Homer gave a beautiful, and almost a regular form to the polytheism of the ancient world.

The philosophers of Greece deduced their morals from the nature of man, rather than from that of God. They meditated, however, on the divine nature as a very curious and important speculation; and in the profound inquiry, they displayed the strength and weakness of the human understanding. Of the four most celebrated schools, the Stoics and the Platonists endeavoured to reconcile the jarring interests of reason and piety. They have left us the most sublime proofs of the existence and perfections of the first cause; but, as it was impossible for them to conceive the creation of matter, the workman in the Stoic philosophy was not sufficiently distinguished from the work; whilst, on the contrary, the spiritual God of Plato and his disciples resembled an idea rather than a substance. The opinion of the academicians and Epicureans were of a less religious cast; but whilst the modest science of the former induced them to doubt, the positive ignorance of the latter urged them to deny the providence of a Supreme Ruler. The spirit of an inquiry, prompted by emulation, and supported by freedom, had divided the public teachers of philosophy into a variety of contending sects; but the ingenious youth, who, from every part, resorted to Athens, and the other seats of learning in the Roman empire, were alike instructed in every school to reject and dispise the religion of the multitude. How, indeed, was it possible, that a philosopher should accept, as divine truths, the idle tales of the poets, and the incoherent traditions of antiquity; or that he should adore as gods those imperfect beings whom he must have despised as men! Against such unworthy adversaries Cicero descended to employ the arms of reason and eloquence; but the satire of Lucian was a much more ade-

quate, as well as efficacious weapon. We may be well assured, that a writer conversant with the world, would never have ventured to expose the gods of his country to public ridicule, had they not already been the objects of secret contempt among the polished and enlightened orders of society.

Notwithstanding the fashionable irreligion which prevailed in the age of the Antonines, both the interest of the priests, and the credulity of the people, were sufficiently respected. In their writings and conversation the philosophers of antiquity asserted the independent dignity of reason; but they resigned their actions to the commands of law and of custom. Viewing with a smile of pity and indulgence the various errors of the vulgar, they diligently practised the ceremonies of their fathers, devoutly frequented the temples of the gods, and sometimes condescending to get a part on the theatre of superstition, they concealed the sentiments of an Atheist under the sacerdotal robes. Reasoners of such a temper were scarcely inclined to wrangle about their respective modes of faith and worship. It was indifferent to them what shape the folly of the multitude might choose to assume; and they approached, with the same inward contempt, and the same external reverence, the altars of the Libyan, the Olympian, or the Capitoline Jupiter. It is not easy to conceive from what motives a spirit of persecution could introduce itself into the Roman counsels. The magistrate could not be actuated by a blind, though honest bigotry, since the magistrates were philosophers, and the schools of Athens had given laws to the senate. They could not be impelled by ambition or avarice, as the temporal and ecclesiastical powers were united in the same hands. The pontiffs were chosen among the most illustrious of the senators; and the office of supreme pontiff was constantly exercised by the emperors themselves. They knew and valued the advantages of religion, as it is connected with civil government. They encouraged the public festivals, which humanize the manners of the people. They managed the arts of divination as a convenient instrument of policy; and they respected, as the firmest bond of society, the useful persuasion, that either in this or in a future life, the crime of perjury is most assuredly punished by the avenging gods. But whilst they acknowledged the general advantages of religion, they were convinced, that the various modes of worship contributed alike to the same salutary purposes; and that in every country, the form of superstition which had received the sanction of time and experience, was the best adapted to the climate and to its inhabitants. Avarice and taste very frequently despoiled the vanquished nations of the elegant statues of their gods, and the rich ornaments of their temples: but in the exercise of the religion which they derived from their ancestors, they uniformly experienced the indulgence, and even protection, of

ON THE PRINCIPLE OF UNIVERSAL TOLERATION IN RELIGION.

the Roman conquerors. The province of Gaul seems, and indeed only seems, an exception to this universal toleration. Under the specious pretext of abolishing human sacrifices, the emperors Tiberius and Claudius suppressed the dangerous power of the Druids: but the priests themselves, their gods, and their altars, subsisted in peaceful obscurity till the final destruction of Paganism.—Rome, the capital of a great monarchy, was incessantly filled with strangers and subjects from every part of the world, who all introduced and enjoyed the favourite superstitions of their native country. Every city in the empire was justified in maintaining the purity of its ancient ceremonies; and the Roman senate, using the common privilege, sometimes interposed to check this inundation of foreign rites. The Egyptian superstition, of all the most contemptible and abject, was frequently prohibited; the temples of Serapis and Isis demolished, and their worshippers banished from Rome and Italy. But the zeal of fanaticism prevailed over the cold and feeble efforts of policy. The exiles returned, the proselytes multiplied, the temples were restored with increasing splendour, and Isis and Serapis assumed their place among the Roman deities. Nor was this indulgence a departure from the usual maxims of government. In the purest ages of the commonwealth, Cybele and Æsculapius had been invited by solemn embassies; and it was customary to tempt the protectors of besieged cities, by promise of more distinguished honours than they possessed in their native country. Rome gradually became the common temple of her subjects; and the freedom of the city was bestowed on all the gods of mankind.—*Gibbon*.

IMPORTANCE OF FREEDOM OF THOUGHT.

Freedom of thought will never become general and popular, unless the magistrate, who is naturally the inspector of every thing that is of such public notoriety as to influence the police, should recover, in the Christian world, the rights that originally belonged to him. Doctrines, either of theory or practice, are for this reason subject to the controul of government; whose power, as well as duty, is however confined to the restraining of what is injurious to the happiness of the community, and to the permitting of every thing that does not disturb the peace and union of mankind.

All states ought to have nearly the same moral system of religious duties: and leave the rest, not to be disputed between men, because that ought to be prevented whenever public tranquillity is disturbed by it, but to the impulse of every man's conscience; thus allowing divines as well as philosophers an entire freedom of thinking. This unlimited toleration, with regard to all tenets and opinions that should not affect the moral code of nations, would be the only method of

preventing, or sapping the foundations of that power, whether spiritual or temporal, which the clergy assume; and which, in some countries, has made them become formidable to the state. This is the only way to extinguish insensibly the enthusiasm of the clergy; and the fanaticism of the people.

Persecution would hasten the downfall of the religions that are now established. Industry and the means of information have now prevailed among the nations, and gained an influence that must restore a certain equilibrium in the moral and civil order of society: the human mind undeceived with regard to its former superstition. If we do not avail ourselves of the present time to re-establish the empire of reason, it must necessarily be given up to new superstitions. Every thing has concurred for these two last centuries to extinguish that furious zeal which ravaged the globe. Navigation and long voyages have insensibly detached a great number of the people from the absurd ideas which superstition inspires. The variety of religious worships, and the difference of nations, has accustomed the most vulgar minds to a sort of indifference for the object that had the greatest influence over their imaginations. Trade, carried on between persons of the most opposite sects, has lessened the religious hatred which was the cause of their divisions. It has been found, that morality and integrity are not inconsistent with any opinions whatever; and that irregularity of manners and avarice are equally prevalent everywhere; and hence it has been concluded, that the manners of men have been regulated by the difference of climate and of government, and by social and natural interest.—*Raynal*.

TOLERATION NOT A PRIESTLY VIRTUE.

The long schism, which had divided the Latin church for near forty years, was finally terminated by the council of Constance; which deposed the pope, John XXIII. for his crimes, and elected Martin V. in his place, who was acknowledged by almost all the kingdoms of Europe. This great and unusual act of authority in the council, gave the Roman pontiffs ever after a mortal antipathy to those assemblies. The same jealousy which had long prevailed in most European countries, between the civil aristocracy and monarchy, now also took place between these powers in the ecclesiastical body. But the great separation of the bishops in the several states, and the difficulty of assembling them, gave the Pope a mighty advantage; and made it more easy for him to centre all the powers of the hierarchy in his own person. The cruelty and treachery which attended the punishment of John Huss and Jerome of Prague, the unhappy disciples of Wickliffe, who, in violation of a safe-conduct, were burned alive for their errors by the council of Constance, prove

this melancholy truth, that toleration is none of the virtues of priests in any form of ecclesiastical government.

The zeal of the Covenanters was, in the political body, under Charles II. a disease dangerous and inveterate; and the government had tried every remedy, but the true one, to allay and correct it. An unlimited toleration, after sects have diffused themselves, and are strongly rooted, is the only expedient which can allay their fervour and make the civil union acquire a superiority above religious distinctions. But as the operations of this regimen are commonly gradual, and at first imperceptible, vulgar politicians are apt, for that reason, to have recourse to more hasty and more dangerous remedies. It is observable, too, that these nonconformists in Scotland neither offered nor demanded toleration; but laid claim to entire superiority, and to the exercise of extreme rigour against their adversaries. The covenant, which they idolized, was a persecuting as well as a seditious band of confederacy; and the government, instead of treating them like madmen, who should be soothed and flattered, and deceived into tranquillity, thought themselves entitled to a rigid obedience; and were too apt, from a mistaken policy, to retaliate upon the dissenters, who had erred from the spirit of enthusiasm.—*Hume*.

GRASPING AMBITION OF PRIESTCRAFT.

The Ecclesiastics, in the reign of Ethelwolf, the Father of Alfred the Great, made very rapid advances in the acquisition of power and grandeur; and in those days of ignorance, inculcating the most absurd and most interested doctrines, though they met sometimes, from the contrary interests of the laity, with an opposition which it required time and address to overcome, they found no obstacle in their reason and understanding.—Not content with the donations of land made them by the Saxon princes and nobles, and with the temporary oblations from the devotion of the people, they had cast a wishful eye on a vast revenue, which they claimed as belonging to them by a divine, indefeasible, and inherent title. However little versed in the Scriptures, they had been able to discover, that the Priests under the Jewish law possessed a tenth of all the produce of land; and forgetting what they themselves taught that the moral part only of that law was obligatory on Christians, they insisted, that this donation was a perpetual property conferred by heaven on those who officiated at the altar. During some centuries, the whole scope of sermons and homilies was directed to this purpose; and one would have imagined, from the general tenor of these discourses, that all the practical parts of Christianity were comprehended in the exact and faithful payment of tithes to the Clergy. Encouraged by their success in inculcating these doctrines they ventured further than they were warranted

even by the Levitical law, and pretended to draw the tenth of all industry, merchandize, wages of labourers, and pay of soldiers; nay, some cannonists went so far as to affirm, that the clergy were entitled to the tithe of the profits made by courtizans in the exercise of their profession. Though parishes had been instituted in England by Honorius Archbishop of Canterbury near two centuries before, the ecclesiastics had never been able to get possession of the tithes; and they therefore seized the favourable opportunity of making that acquisition, when a weak, superstitious prince was on the throne, and when the people, discouraged by their losses from the Dances, and terrified with the fear of future invasions, were susceptible of any impression which bore the appearance of religion.—*Hume*.

IMPORTANT ARGUMENT AGAINST INTOLERANCE.

Where shall we find the rule to measure the merit of any particular religion? unless we could give all men the same constitutions of body and mind; the same educations, tempers, and talents, we shall in vain expect any general agreement on this subject. Since, then, this diversity of judgment is a circumstance in the nature of things unavoidable, it seems to be alike repugnant to Christianity and common sense, to load any man with obloquy and invective, who happens to differ from us in opinion upon the subject. God, who alone knows the hearts of men, and the extent of their abilities, can estimate the strength of the intellectual faculties, and the force of the natural propensities of each individual; and he, alone, is the only judge, how far any person is in a wilful error. But it is unquestionably the duty and interest of mankind, instead of polluting their principles, and provoking their opponents, by calumnies and reproaches; instead of fancying their tenets alone are accompanied with rectitude and wisdom, to distrust their own opinions, to be ready to hear those of others with good temper, and a liberal disposition; to abate in non-essentials a little of their own firmness; to make mutual concessions, and therefore to preserve inviolate the peace of civil society, and the bond of Christian charity unbroken.

With this we close our present number; and in our next shall take up the question of the *Supernatural and Divine Origin of Christianity*, in which we shall develop the new and original views of Mr Hennel, on this important subject.

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FREE-THINKERS' INFORMATION FOR THE PEOPLE.

"LET ALL HAVE FULL LIBERTY TO TEACH AND MAINTAIN WHATEVER OPINIONS THEY MAY CHOOSE."—*Melancthon.*

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A REFUTATION OF THE SUPERNATURAL ORIGIN OF CHRISTIANITY.

ARTICLE I.—THE STATE OF RELIGIOUS OPINION AMONG THE JEWS, BEFORE, AND AT THE TIME OF CHRIST.*

In an inquiry into the origin of Christianity, in which an endeavour is made to explain away the supernatural features of the system, and to reduce all its facts to the ordinary operations of the laws of nature, it is necessary that a glance should be taken at the state of society and opinion among the Jews, at, and prior to, the time when the founder of Christianity is said to have made his appearance. As knowledge on these points will do much to throw light on the dark and obscure origin of the most extraordinary system of religious faith ever adopted by man, we shall devote a portion of our space to an historical sketch of the Jewish nation, from the Babylonish captivity to the time of Christ, wherein a review will be given of the manners, customs, and religious opinions of this people, and of the times and circumstances which led to the mission of Jesus.

The Jewish nation, which was of considerable political importance in the days of David and Solomon, was much weakened, during the reigns of Ahaz and his successors, by the encroachments of the Assyrians, and extinguished, for a time, as a political power, by the conquest of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar. [B. C. 588.]

But the national feeling in a people of eight hundred years' standing, of peculiar manners, associations, and religious worship, survives the capture of their towns; and, during each successive transportation of their tribes [B. C.

725-588], and their subsequent captivity at Babylon, the Jews consoled themselves with the hope of a speedy restoration to their own land.* They compensated themselves for their present insignificance with the expectation of future greatness;† and their very sufferings were made a theme soothing to their vanity, by being considered, not as the effect of superior power on the part of their enemies, but as a paternal and corrective chastisement from their own God.‡

[B. C. 536.] When Cyrus permitted the small remnant of pure Jews to re-occupy their own land, and to rebuild their temple and city,§ their most extravagant hopes seemed about to be realised. A new æra opened upon them;|| they were in the way to take rank again amongst the nations; and if this could be attained out of a state of general servitude, a patriotic Jew might easily believe his nation destined, in the end, to eclipse Egypt and Assyria.¶

Accordingly in their writings about the time of the restoration, (and a large proportion of those called the prophets appear to be nearly of that date,)** these topics occur in almost every page. The imagination and literary talents of the Jews had been much developed by their contact with the Chaldees and Persians, and naturally displayed themselves chiefly on such a stirring theme. Besides, the Jewish leaders would encourage their poets and orators to choose

* Jeremiah xxxii. 15. † Obadiah 17.

‡ Ezekiel, *passim*, xxxix. 23.

§ Compare Ezra i. 3, with 1 Esdras iv. 63.

|| Haggai ii. 9. ¶ Isaiah xiv. 2.

** Haggai, B.C. 520.

* These articles are abridged from "Hemel's Inquiry concerning the Origin of Christianity." The work to which reference has previously been made.

such subjects, in order to animate the people under difficulties.

It is not surprising, then, to find in the poetic writings of the Old Testament extravagant descriptions of a kingdom of Israel which should cover the earth,* and of a great prince who should restore the throne of David.† The beautiful anticipations which, under various forms, have existed in nearly all nations, of the future perfection of the earth, were, in the minds of the Jews, blended in a peculiar manner with the hopes and fortunes of Israel. On this subject each prophet or poet indulged in his own fancies; but one prevalent notion seems to have been that this kingdom would be established, and their final triumph over the nations effected, not so much by military means, in which they were obviously deficient, as by some special intervention of their protector, the God of Israel. It was supposed that the presence of the Deity would be then made manifest to them in a more visible manner than had been known hitherto, and that signs and wonders, more impressive and more public than those granted in the days of Moses, would at last proclaim to the whole world the connexion subsisting between God and his chosen people.‡ Hence this state of things came to be called popularly the Kingdom of God, or the Kingdom of Heaven.§

The captivity and restoration were thought of less and less as events rolled on; but the writings which they had occasioned, remained amongst the Jews, a conspicuous part of their scanty literature. There is, indeed, in them so much of rich imagery and wild beauty, that they are to this day read with pleasure by those who look upon them merely as poetical relics; it is no wonder, then, that they should have continued for centuries in the hearts and mouths of all patriotic Jews, and that, when sufficiently veiled by antiquity, the prophets, as well as the law, should have been revered as divine oracles.

Events, however, did not correspond with these prophecies of Jewish greatness. With slow and painful efforts,

their temple and city were rebuilt under the leadership of Zerubbabel, Ezra, and Nehemiah [B.C. 536—445]; but they remained insignificant as a nation, and were successively tributary to the Persians and Macedonians, until the revolution effected by Judas Maccabæus. [B.C. 166.] Under him and the subsequent able princes of the Asmonæan race, they attained the rank of a respectable second-rate power, although inferior to the adjoining kingdoms of Syria and Egypt. But the Asmonæan dynasty grew weak from internal dissension; and during the quarrel between Hyrcanus and Aristobulus, Jerusalem was taken by Pompey, who first imposed upon the Jews a Roman tribute. [B.C. 63.] Under the patronage of the Romans, Herod the Idumean obtained the sovereignty, [B.C. 40,] to the exclusion of the native Asmonæan family; and although generally hateful to the Jews as a heathen and usurper, maintained by a vigorous government the respectability of the nation. After his death, [B.C. 3,] however, the Jews were compelled to make another step towards national servitude, by the appointment of Roman governors of Judea [A.D. 6 or 7], who exercised a jurisdiction superior to the family of Herod, and of the Jewish sanhedrim.

Throughout all these changes, the Kingdom of Heaven may be seen to have been from time to time a popular idea,* and during the Roman encroachments, it revived in full force. The romantic exploits of Maccabæus had renewed the Jews' spirit of independence, and encouraged the hope that the holy nation might, at length, in its turn succeed Assyria, Persia, and Macedonia, in the empire of the world. And now, that God's people should again be slaves to the Gentiles, was a thought of grief and indignation. The Jewish princes and aristocracy were easily soothed into submission to their powerful masters, who allowed them to retain many of their privileges; but the indignation of the populace broke out in continual tumults and insurrections,† which the Roman governor, aided by the priests and nobles, always quickly

* Haggai ii. 22. † Ezekiel xxxiv. 23, 24.

‡ Haggai ii. 6, 7. § Zechariah xiv. 9.

* Tobit xiii. 15, 18.

† Josephus, Ant. xvii. ch. 10.

suppressed. The most remarkable of these was the insurrection of Judas the Galilean or Gaulonite,* who persuaded the Galileans to resist an extraordinary taxation imposed by Cyrenius, the Roman Governor of Syria. Josephus does not mention the fate of Judas himself; but it is probable that it was the usual one of the insurgents against the Romans, since we find soon afterwards that the taxation was universally submitted to, and that his two sons, James and Simon, were crucified under the procuratorship of Tiberius Alexander.

The account which we have of Judas the Galilean comes from Josephus, who, being himself a noble and a conservative, disliked all attempts at insurrection and innovation; yet through his angry comments it is easy to perceive that Judas was a man of great talent, and that he left a deep impression on the minds of his countrymen; for he is characterized as being not only the leading revolter against the Romans, but also the head of a fourth philosophic sect, which occasioned the alteration of the customs of Moses, and, though agreeing with most of the pharisaic notions of religion, had an inviolable attachment to liberty, saying that God was to be their only ruler and Lord. Judas was therefore both a political and religious reformer; and as his sentiments spread extensively among the Galileans, these provincials came to be looked upon with suspicion by the Romans for their disaffection to the tribute, and by the other Jews for their liberalism or heresy in religion.

Even before the time of Judas, the Jews had begun to allow themselves free discussion on the subject of their religion. The system of Moses, intended for a secluded people, was found to be inconsistent, in many points, with the spirit of the age, when they were forced into continual contact with other nations. From the restoration of the laws of Moses by Maccabeus, all the efforts of the strict Mosaic party were unable to stop the influx of the customs and notions of the Greeks, and to prevent the admixture of Gentile philosophies with the law and the prophets. As early as in the priesthood of Jonathan Apphus, [B. C. 161,] the Jews were

divided into three principle sects of Sadducees, Pharisees, and Essenes, of which the latter, consisting chiefly of the lower ranks, presents a remarkable picture of simplicity and moral purity, tintured by the austere spirit of monachism. The principles of benevolence, morality, and religion, being implanted in the nature of man, it is natural that some of those combinations for common objects which men love to form together, should be directed to the cultivation and advancement of these principles. Hence there have frequently been seen, in different ages of the world, societies attempting to exhibit schools of perfect virtue, and to attain the highest possible degrees of temperance, benevolence, and piety. In the Essene sect we see an example of such a society influenced by a religion of Monotheism, and by the national literature already described. The condition of the three sects and especially of the Essenes, forms such an interesting and important feature in the Jewish history at the period we are now arrived at, that it is worth while to transcribe the accounts of them given by Josephus and Philo.

Josephus says, (*War.* ii. ch. 7,) "For there are three philosophical sects among the Jews. The followers of the first of whom are the Pharisees, of the second the Sadducees, and the third sect, which pretends to a severer discipline, are called Essenes. These are Jews by birth, and they cherish mutual love beyond other men. They reject pleasure as evil; and they look upon temperance and a conquest over the passions as the greatest virtue. There prevails among them a contempt of marriage; but they receive the children of others, and educate them as their own, while yet tender and susceptible of instruction. They do not indeed abolish the marriage institution, as being necessary to perpetuate the succession of mankind; but they guard against the immodesty of the women, who, they think, in no instance preserve their fidelity to one man.

"The Essenes despise riches, and are so liberal as to excite our admiration. Nor can any be found amongst them who is more wealthy than the rest; for it is a law with them, that those who join their order should distribute their

* Josephus, *Ant.* xviii. ch. 1.

possessions among the members, the property of each being added to that of the rest, as being all brethren. They deem oil as a pollution, and wipe it off, should any inadvertently touch them, for they think it an ornament to be plain, and always to wear white apparel. They appoint stewards to superintend the common interest; and these have no other employment than to consult the good of each member without distinction.

"This sect is not confined to one city, but many of them dwell in every city, and if any of their sect come from other places, what they have lies open for them, just as if it were their own; and they go into such as they never knew before, as if they had been ever so long acquainted with them. For which reason they carry nothing with them, when they travel into remote parts, though still they take their weapons with them, for fear of thieves. Accordingly there is, in every city where they live, one appointed particularly to take care of strangers, and to provide garments and other necessities for them. But the habit and management of their bodies is such as children use who are in fear of their masters. Nor do they allow of the change of garments, or of shoes, till they be first entirely torn to pieces, or worn out by time. Nor do they either buy or sell anything to one another; but every one of them gives what he hath to him that wanteth it, and receives from him again in lieu of it what may be convenient for himself: and although there be no requital made, they are fully allowed to take what they want of whomsoever they please."

Josephus, in another place, gives a concise account of the Essenes, thus:—

"The doctrine of the Essenes is this: That all things are best ascribed to God. They teach the immortality of souls, and esteem that the rewards of righteousness are to be earnestly striven for; and when they send what they have dedicated to God into the temple, they do not offer sacrifices, because they have more pure lustrations of their own; on which account they are excluded from the common court of the temple, but offer their sacrifices themselves; yet is their course of life better than that of other men, and they entirely addict themselves to husbandry. It also de-

serves our admiration, how much they exceed all other men that addict themselves to virtue, and this in righteousness; and indeed to such a degree, that as it hath never appeared among any other men, neither Greeks, nor barbarians, no, not for a little time, so hath it endured a long while among them. This is demonstrated by that institution of theirs, which will not suffer anything to hinder them from having all things in common; so that a rich man enjoys no more of his own wealth than he who hath nothing at all. There are about four thousand men that live in this way, and neither marry wives, nor are desirous to keep servants, as thinking the latter tempts men to be unjust, and the former gives the handle to domestic quarrels; but as they live by themselves, they minister to one another. They also appoint certain stewards to receive the incomes of their revenues, and of the fruits of the ground; such as are good men and priests, who are to get their corn and their food ready for them. They none of them differ from others of the Essenes in their way of living, but do the most resemble those Dacæ who are called Polistæ (dwellers in cities").—*Antiq.* xviii. c. 1.

Philo gives a more minute account of the Essenes, and in a still more panegyrical style. The following are a few extracts:

"Palestine and Syria are not unproductive of honourable and good men, but are occupied by numbers, not inconsiderable compared even with the very populous nation of the Jews. These, exceeding four thousand, are called Essenes, which name, though not, in my opinion, formed by strict analogy, corresponds in Greek to the word 'holy.' For they have attained the highest holiness in the worship of God, and that not by sacrificing animals, but by cultivating purity of heart. They live principally in villages. Some cultivate the ground; others pursue the arts of peace, and such employments as are beneficial to themselves without injury to their neighbours. They are the only people who, though destitute of money and possessions, felicitate themselves as rich, deeming riches to consist in frugality and contentment. Among them no one manufactures darts, arrows, or weapons of war. They decline trade,

commerce, and navigation, as incentives to covetousness; nor have they any slaves among them, but all are free, and all in their turn administer to others. They condemn the owners of slaves as tyrants, who violate the principles of justice and equality.

"As to learning, they leave that branch of it which is called logic, as not necessary to the acquisition of virtue, to fierce disputants about words; and cultivate natural philosophy only so far as respects the existence of God and the creation of the universe; other parts of natural knowledge they give up to vain and subtle metaphysicians, as really surpassing the powers of man. But moral philosophy they eagerly study, conformably to the established laws of their country, the excellence of which the human mind can hardly comprehend without the inspiration of God.

"These laws they study at all times, but more especially on the Sabbath. Regarding the seventh day as holy, they abstain on it from all other works, and assemble in those sacred places which are called *Synagogues*, arranging themselves according to their age, the younger below his senior, with a deportment grave, becoming, and attentive. Then one of them, taking the *Bible*, reads a portion of it, the obscure parts of which are explained by a another more skilful person. For most of the Scriptures they interpret in that symbolical sense which they have zealously copied from the patriarchs; and the subjects of instruction are piety, holiness, righteousness; domestic and political economy; the knowledge of things really good, bad, and indifferent; what objects ought to be pursued, and what to be avoided. In discussing these topics the ends which they have in view, and to which they refer as so many rules to guide them, are the love of God, the love of virtue, and the love of man. Of their love to God, they give innumerable proofs by leading a life of continued purity, unstained by oaths and falsehoods, by regarding him as the author of every good, and the cause of no evil. They evince their attachment to virtue by their freedom from avarice, from ambition, from sensual pleasure; by their temperance and patience; by their frugality, simplicity, and contentment; by their humility, their regard

to the laws, and other similar virtues. Their love to man is evinced by their benignity, their equity, and their liberality, of which it is not improper to give a short account, though no language can adequately describe it.

"In the first place, there exists among them no house, however private, which is not open to the reception of all the rest, and not only the members of the same society assemble under the same domestic roof, but even strangers of the same persuasion have free admission to join them. There is but one treasure, whence all derive subsistence; and not only their provisions, but their clothes are common property. Such mode of living under the same roof, and of dieting at the same table, cannot, in fact, be proved to have been adopted by any other description of men.

"The sick are not despised or neglected, but live in ease and affluence, receiving from the treasury whatever their disorder or their exigencies require. The aged, too, among them, are loved, revered, and attended as parents by affectionate children; and a thousand hands and hearts prop their tottering years with comforts of every kind. Such are the champions of virtue, which philosophy, without the parade of Grecian oratory, produces, proposing, as the end of their institutions, the performance of those laudable actions which destroy slavery, and render freedom invincible."

Philo then describes the Essenes who embraced the *contemplative life*, and were called *Therapeutæ*, or healers, because they professed to cure men's minds of vices, and all disorders. "The persons who profess this art are seized by the love of heaven, being filled with enthusiasm to see the supreme object of desire. Thinking themselves already dead to the world, they desire only a blessed immortal existence. They appoint their heirs, and flec without a look behind, bidding farewell to brothers, sons, parents, and wives. They fix their habitations on the outside of cities, in gardens and villages, not from a religious hatred of mankind, but to avoid a pernicious intercourse with those who differ from them in opinions and manners. This society now prevails throughout the

habitable earth, but more particularly in Egypt, about Alexandria, and beyond the lake Maria. In each house is an apartment called a sanctuary or monastery, into which they bring only the laws, the divinely inspired prophets, the psalms, with such other writings as enlarge their knowledge and perfect their piety. The idea of God is ever present to their thoughts, so that their imagination dwells, even in sleep, upon the beauty of his attributes; many of them therefore deliver magnificent visions, suggested by their sacred philosophy in the hours of repose. . . . They spend the whole interval from morning to evening in religious exercises, reading the holy scriptures, and unfolding their symbolical meaning according to that mode of interpretation which they have derived from their fathers. For the words, they conceive, though expressing a literal sense, convey also a figurative sense addressed to the understanding. They possess also the commentaries of those sages who, being the founders of the sect, left behind them numerous monuments of the allegorical style. These they use as models of allegory and composition; and compose in honour of God's psalms and hymns, in all the variety of measures which the solemnity of religion admits. . . . On the seventh day, having collected into one assembly, one of the elders addresses them with grave looks, being not desirous to display powers of language, but to express moral truths thoroughly digested, so as to remain lasting principles of conduct. . . . They eat no food more costly than coarse bread seasoned with salt, to which the more delicate add hyssop; and drink no liquid but the clear water of the stream. Their chief object is to practise humility, being convinced that, as falsehood is the root of pride, freedom from pride is the offspring of truth."

[About A.D. 8.] After the failure of the revolt of Judas the Galilean, the Jewish populace ceased for a time to attempt any armed resistance to the Romans,† and found a vent for their discontent in the anticipation of the miraculous intervention promised by

the prophets. In the chief towns, open displays even of this spirit were repressed by the Roman officers, and their allies the Jewish princes, as a dangerous symptom;* but it continued in the villages and country places. A passage of the prophet Malachi had announced that Elijah was to appear again previously to the divine intervention of the God of Israel. An enthusiast of the Essene sect, named John, assumed the dress and manners of the expected prophet,† and appeared in the desert near Jordan, baptizing the people and urging them to repent, for the kingdom of heaven was at hand.‡ He accompanied this prediction with exhortations to virtue, according to the Essene school, and does not appear to have excited the people to insurrection, for Josephus speaks of him with respect as a teacher of virtue.§

The appearance, however, of an enthusiast, preaching in the desert their long-expected kingdom, produced much excitement throughout Judea.|| Crowds came to hear him, and to give the usual Jewish sign of adherence, submission to baptism. Amongst these was a Galilean named Jesus, the son of Joseph, a carpenter of Nazareth.

All classes of society must from time to time produce individuals of rare mental superiority. In ordinary times this may remain unseen and dormant; but when some prevalent enthusiasm is abroad, it is quickened into life and action, and breaks forth to public gaze in the form of a great character. Jesus, the peasant of Galilee, possessed one of those gifted minds which are able to make an impression on mankind,* and the age in which he lived supplied the stimulus required for its manifestation. He partook of the enthusiasm common to many patriotic Jews of his time, viz., an expectation of the approaching miraculous exaltation of Israel; and the perception of his own mental elevation over those around him led him to indulge in the idea, not unnatural to any ardent Israelite, that he himself was to be the prophet and prince like unto Moses who should fill the restored

* Josephus, Ant. xviii. ch. 4.

† Malachi iv. 5, 6.

‡ Matthew iii. 2. Mark i. 4. Luke iii. 3.

§ Josephus, Ant. xviii. ch. 5.

|| Acts xviii. and xix.

* Pliny, lib. 5, cap. 17. See Prid. Conn. part ii. book 5.

† Josephus, Ant. ch. 2.

throne of David. He had studied intensely the literature within the reach of the Jewish peasants, the Scriptures of the Old Testament,* with which his mind was the more thoroughly imbued, as its attention had not been diffused over a wider field of writings. But a bold and active mind cannot be entirely fettered, even by the authorities which it acknowledges; these may give to it a direction, but its native energy will find a vent in original thought and speculation. The inconsistency between the admission of a divine authority and the exercise of reason, is overlooked; or if attended to, an excuse for the latter is easily found in the right of each mind to explain and interpret at least in its own way. So Jesus, although from early associations, patriotism, and conviction, a sincere believer in the divine authority of Moses and the prophets,† drew his chief materials of thought from his own observation of men and things; commented freely‡ upon the Scriptures, which it never occurred to him to controvert; scrupled not to give to them his own sense;§ and delivered his own sayings with force and sufficiency.|| Whilst admitting to himself only the office of fulfilling the law and the prophets, he, in reality, made these the stock on which he grafted his own thoughts and sentiments. In like manner, although his station and place of abode made him peculiarly conversant with the doctrines of the Essenes and Galileans, he was not a mere follower of either party, but adopted and re-invigorated with his sanction, so much of the sentiments of either as accorded with his own taste and judgment. He retained the pure morality of the Essenes, but neglected their rigid austerities. He adopted the religious liberalism of Judas, but he abstained from the evidently useless attempt of armed opposition to the Romans, and gave another direction to the excitement of his countrymen.

A mind conscious of its own power, and whose energy is increased by a tincture of enthusiasm, must make it-

self felt in some way. It was impossible for Jesus to remain his whole life a carpenter at Nazareth; but all ordinary ways to greatness were then closed to the lower ranks in Judea, except that of heading a revolt. There was no army; and the priesthood or sanhedrim could only be reached by subservience to the Romans or one of the petty native rulers. The necessity of action in a sphere congenial to the ruling tendencies of the mind, is, with some persons, a more powerful motive than a cool calculation of consequences; and Jesus determined to imitate Moses, and fulfil the prophets, by assuming the character of the Messiah, or the Prophet-king of Israel.

The preaching of John roused him from the obscurity in which he had remained till about the thirtieth year of his age; and immediately after his baptism by his predecessor, he began himself, with far greater resources, to preach on the same favourite topic, the approach of the kingdom of heaven.* His discourses, like those of John, were filled up with exhortations to morality, agreeing mostly with those of the older Jewish writings and of the Essenes, and with vigorous reproofs of the prevailing corruptions of the age. Public preaching on such topics, accompanied by inexhaustible illustrations from nature and familiar objects,† could hardly fail in any country of drawing crowds of listeners.

In a nation little acquainted with physical science, mental superiority is often supposed to be connected with some degree of command over the inanimate world; and the multitudes who heard Jesus, imagined that nature, as well as they, must recognise his authority. Nor was it unnatural, in the state of science at that time, that Jesus himself should share the notion.‡ Accordingly, when urged by the crowds to heal their maladies, he yielded to their importunities § so far as to speak the word which they wanted.|| In many such cases, the confident expectation of its efficiency was enough to produce an

* The Apocrypha is not an important exception; and the other Jewish writings were chiefly comments upon the Scriptures.

† Matthew xxiii. 2. ‡ Ibid. xix. 8.

§ Ibid. xxii. 40. || Ibid. v. 21, 22.

* Matthew iv. 17. † Ibid. xiii. 34.

‡ Josephus, War, book iii. c. viii. § 3, 9.

§ Ibid. ix. 27.

|| Matthew viii. 13—16, xiv. 14, xv. 30, xx. 34.

apparent success, and it appears that Jesus was in general cautious of committing himself to the trial, unless there was this confidence in the party applying.* But when he found the attempt succeed, he would begin to entertain more seriously the idea that he possessed the supernatural power attributed to him, and might easily conclude, that, by relying on it, and boldly exercising it, any miracle was possible.† Perceiving that in such cases diffidence usually preceded a failure, he might naturally infer that a sufficient degree of confidence only was wanting to produce the most wonderful effect.

The prevalent opinion of his country was, that diseases were occasioned by the entrance of demons into the human body, and the power of expelling them by certain words of command was believed in by the most enlightened Jews.‡ The miracle was one of the most ambiguous sort, since any change of symptoms might be regarded as proof of the demon's exit. In cases of lunacy, an authoritative word or gesture might produce a momentary calm; and in fits, exhaustion must soon bring on the same state. In many other diseases, palsy, fever, &c., a sudden energetic effort on the part of the patient might produce the appearance of recovery. Instances of success, which were alone likely to be recorded, (although we have some indications of occasional failure,)§ would be improved in passing

from mouth to mouth, and by zealous partizans the account would soon be embellished with a few tales of more decided miracles, such as curing the blind and raising the dead; especially if such tales had some foundation in fact, so far as that the attempt, or the application only, had been really made.

Jesus having thus acquired the reputation of a miracle-worker, as well as of a prophet, was followed in his progress through the towns of Galilee by multitudes of the populace, and even by some of the better sort of the Jews,* who cherished in secret the hope of their country's revival, and began to look upon the new prophet of Nazareth, as more than a common pretender. Jesus then began to lay the foundation for a separate organised society by selecting twelve of his countrymen to be his more immediate supporters, promising them that when he should obtain his kingdom, they should rule under him over the twelve tribes of Israel. These he sent forth to the neighbouring towns to preach,† like John and himself, the preparation for the approaching miraculous regeneration of Israel, or the Kingdom of Heaven.‡

Having progressed thus far, we shall, in our next article, take up the accounts of the life of Jesus, given by the evangelists, and then proceed to review all the supernatural events interwoven therein.

plain that want of will was not the cause of the ill success of Jesus, since he did make some attempts, and also because the word "marvelled" implies some disappointment.

This passage shews very clearly that belief was considered as an essential preparation for a miracle; and therefore when the miracle did not take place, it was natural enough for the disciples to attribute the failure to the want of belief.

* That some of the disciples, besides Matthew, had been in tolerable worldly circumstances, may be conjectured from Matthew xix. 29.

† Matthew x. 7.

‡ See Matthew v. 35; x. 5; xv. 24; xix. 28; xxiii. 37: and 1 Samuel xxiv. 6.

* Matthew ix. 2. † Ibid. xvii. 19, 20.

‡ Josephus has the following passages concerning demons:—"Yet after all this pains in getting, it (the root Baaras) is only valuable on account of one virtue it hath, that if it be only brought to sick persons, it quickly drives away those called demons, which are no other than the spirits of the wicked, that enter into men that are alive, and kill them, unless they can obtain some help against them." War vii. ch. vi. 3.

§ Compare Matthew x. 1, "And he gave them power to cast out unclean spirits," with xviii. 16, "And I brought him to thy disciples, and they could not cure him." See also Mark vi. 5, "And he could there do no mighty work (*οὐκ ἔδυνάτο*), save that he laid his hands on a few sick folk and healed them. And he marvelled because of their unbelief." The translation of the improved version is "would not," but the usual sense of *δυναται* is "to be able." Besides it is

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A REFUTATION OF THE SUPERNATURAL ORIGIN OF CHRISTIANITY.

ARTICLE II.—ON THE DATE AND CREDIBILITY OF THE GOSPEL OF ST. MATTHEW.*

THE four Gospels contain many things agreeing with the usual order of nature, and necessary to account for the growth of Christianity, such as the existence, public preaching, and death of Christ; but they also contain many things unusual in the order of nature. Admitting that a miracle may be proved by sufficient testimony, we are forced also to admit that testimony, in order to be sufficient in this case, must be considerably stronger than that upon which we should believe ordinary facts. Paley agrees that Hume states the case of miracles fairly, when he says that it is a question whether it be more improbable that the miracle should be true, or the testimony false. *Evid.* vol. i. p. 11.

Paley, however, labours to prove that we ought to admit an antecedent probability in favour of a miraculous revelation, from our knowledge of the existence, disposition, and constant agency of the Deity. Others, with Rousseau, have argued that it is antecedently improbable that the Deity should choose to reveal himself by signs of such doubtful and difficult verification as miracles. Most of those who approach the evangelical histories are probably influenced by considerations of one or the other sort; and on the antecedent bias it will depend whether the degree of credibility which can be established for the evangelists appear sufficient to attest even their miraculous narratives.

Hence the different conclusions arrived at by those who apply to the study of the Christian evidences. In either case there seems to be a departure from the strict inductive method, which should lead us to inquire, not what the Deity would or ought to have done, but what he was actually done. It seems beyond the power of the human intellect to decide, *à priori*, whether a miraculous revelation, or instruction through nature alone, be more suitable to the character of God; but mere common sense, accompanied by industry, patience, and candour, is able to form an opinion as to the weight due to the historical evidence alleged in favour of the supposed miraculous revelation. Critical and historical research, therefore, appears to be the only means of arriving at a sound conclusion.

Let us, then, collect the best evidence we can as to the evangelists' veracity and knowledge of the things which they relate, in order to judge if it be so strong as to warrant a reasonable man in believing them when they relate miracles; or, in other words, if, considering the circumstances in which they were placed, and what we can perceive of their views, motives, and characters, it be more improbable that the miracles should be true, or their testimony false.

The first Gospel bears no author's name in itself, but has come down to us from the earliest ages of the church under the title of "the Gospel according to St. Matthew."

The writer appears to have been acquainted with real events till nearly the end of the Jewish war, but ignorant

* These articles are abridged from "Hennel's Inquiry concerning the Origin of Christianity." The work to which reference has previously been made.

of them afterwards, hence it follows that he may have written between the years A.D. 66 and 70. The Christians who took refuge at Pella probably addressed many exhortations to their brethren to escape from the city, and to avoid following the impostors; and in the loose state of Christ's history at that time, it was easy to amplify some traditionary sayings of his into directions for the crisis at hand. The author of Matthew, writing about that time, naturally introduced such a prominent topic of the day into his work; and being, as is seen from other parts of it, less studious of historical accuracy than of rendering it interesting and impressive, gave to his description the favourite and poetical form of prophecy. The greater part is well adapted to the period between the defeat of Cestius, A.D. 66, and the arrival of the Romans around the city, 14th April, A.D. 70; for until then, escape, although opposed by the tyrants, was still possible, and the miseries of the city were growing daily more intolerable. The most probable date seems to be 68 or 69, because, with the exception of the allusion to the destruction of the temple, the writer does not shew any acquaintance with the events accompanying the final capture of the city, which he was most likely to do, if he knew them, after dwelling so minutely on the previous occurrences; as is seen in the account of Luke. The allusion to the temple was not unlikely to be made about the year 68, since Josephus says, that most anticipated the entire destruction of the city. Nevertheless, there appears to be no very weighty reason against placing the date as late as A.D. 70, cotemporary with or immediately after the capture of the city; for although the exhortations to flight could then be of no practical use, the record of them helped to describe, in an impressive manner, the feelings of the Christians during the terrible crisis through which they had just passed.

Zacharias, the son of Baruch, was murdered about the year 68. Arguments prove that he was the same as the Zacharias, son of Barachias, alluded to Matt. xxiii. 35, tend to confirm the date of 68, or later, for this Gospel.

Since these two chapters, xxiii. and xxiv. have always formed part of the

Gospel of Matthew, the whole compilation must be dated about 68.

II. Let us see what can be collected from external testimony concerning the date.

Barnabas, in an epistle written apparently soon after the fall of Jerusalem, A.D. 71 or 72, has this passage: "Let us therefore beware, lest it should happen to us as it is written. There are many called, few chosen." These words are in Matt. xx. 16, and xxii. 14. And there are many other passages in Barnabas, agreeing almost literally with some in Matthew, although they are not said to be quotations.

Clement of Rome, A.D. 96, says, "For thus he (Jesus) said, Be ye merciful that ye may obtain mercy; . . . with what measure ye mete, with the same it shall be measured to you:" which agrees with Matt. vii. 2.

A.D. 116. Papias, bishop of Hierapolis, is the first who mentions Matthew's Gospel by name. His work is lost, but Eusebius says that it contained the following,—“Matthew wrote the divine oracles in the Hebrew tongue, and every one interpreted them as he was able.” Eusebius in one place calls Papias an “eloquent man, and skilful in the Scriptures;” in another, “a man of no great capacity.”

A.D. 178. Irenæus, bishop of Lyons, makes the first clear mention of all the four Gospels, and says of Matthew's "Matthew, then among the Jews, wrote a Gospel in their own language, while Peter and Paul were preaching the Gospel at Rome, and founding (or establishing) the church there. The deaths of Peter and Paul are dated variously from A.D. 64 to 68.* According to Jerome and Bede, they happened in the last year of Nero, or A.D. 68. They had been preaching at Rome together for several years before.

A.D. 230 Origen says that, according to the tradition received by him, the first Gospel was written by Matthew, once a publican, afterwards a disciple of Jesus Christ; who delivered it to the

* Lardner is in favour of the year 65; but the arguments for so early a date appear to be of little weight. (Hist. of Apostles, ch. xi.) Jerome says, without any appearance of doubt, that Peter was put to death in the last year of Nero, i.e. A.D. 68, De V. I. cap. I.

Jewish believers, composed in the Hebrew tongue.

A.D. 368. Epiphanius. "Matthew wrote in Hebrew;" and "Matthew wrote first, and Mark soon (*εὐθὺς*) after him, being a follower of Peter at Rome." Now Mark wrote soon after Peter's death; so that if we take the date of this according to Jerome, Matthew must have written about the year 68.

A.D. 394. Theodore of Mopsuestia. "For a good while, the Apostles preached chiefly to Jews in Judea. Afterwards Providence made way for conducting them to remote countries. Peter went to Rome (A.D. 63 or 64), the rest elsewhere; John in particular took up his abode at Ephesus. About this time, the other evangelists, Matthew, Mark, and Luke, published their gospels, which were soon spread all over the world."

A.D. 392. Jerome. "The first evangelist is Matthew, the publican, surnamed Levi, who wrote his Gospel in Judea, in the Hebrew language, chiefly for the sake of the Jews that believed in Jesus."

A. D. 398. Chrysostom. "Matthew is said to have written his Gospel at the request of the Jewish believers, who desired him to put down in writing what he had taught them by word of mouth; and he is said to have written in Hebrew;" and afterwards, "In what place each one of the evangelists wrote, cannot be said with certainty."*

The evidence of Matthew the Apostle's being the real author is not very strong; because most of the writers quoted may have borrowed from Papias; but if it were so, we know so little of that apostle,† that a work of his cannot be exempt from scrutiny.

He (or the person bearing his name) quotes from the Old Testament, as prophecies relating to Jesus, texts which, when examined, are found to

* It was only after the time of Chrysostom that some writers began to attribute an earlier date to Matthew. (Lardner, Hist. of Apost. ch. v.) Lardner concludes that Matthew's Gospel was written not before 63 or 64. But he assumes that "the predictions must have been recorded before they were accomplished." Sect. 3.

† In addition to the account in the New Testament, Lardner could find only a few uncertain traditions. Hist. of Apost. ch. v.

have nothing to do with Jesus. For instance, ch. ii. 15, "And he (Jesus) was there (in Egypt), that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, out of Egypt have I called my son." The passage in Hosea is "When Israel was a child, then I loved him, and called my son out of Egypt," ch. xi. 1. Some he quotes incorrectly, as ch. ii. 6, compared with Micah v. 2. One passage which he quotes as a prophecy,* ii. 23, is not found in the Old Testament; although there is one in Judges, xiii. 5, resembling it in sound only. See also ch. ii. 17, and iv. 14.

The misquotation or misapplication of the prophecies might be regarded merely as a proof of negligence or erroneous judgment; but the converse, viz. the perversion of facts, in order to fit them to the prophecies, indicates historical dishonesty.

In Zechariah ix. 9, is this passage: "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold thy King cometh unto thee; he is just and having salvation, lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass."

Matthew relates the entry of Jesus into Jerusalem thus, xxi. 1: "Then sent Jesus two disciples, saying unto them, Go into the village over against you, and straightway ye shall find an ass tied, and a colt with her: loose them, and bring them unto me. And if any man say ought unto you, ye shall say, The Lord hath need of them; and straightway he will send them (*αὐτοὺς*). All this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying, Tell ye the daughter of Zion, Behold thy King cometh unto thee, meek, and sitting upon an ass, and a colt the foal of an ass. And the disciples went, and did as Jesus commanded them, and brought the ass and the colt, and put on them (*ἐπ' αὐτῶν*) their clothes, and set him thereon," literally, "on them" (*ἐπεκαθίσαν ἐπ' αὐτῶν*).†

* "This text (he shall be called a Nazarene) is entirely wanting in all our copies, Hebrew and Greek." Whiston's Essay on O. T. p. 104. Lit. accomp. p. 4.

† Augustine explained the matter by saying, he rode first one, and then the other.

Mark, Luke, and John, mention only one animal, *the colt of an ass*, although Mark appears to have copied the greater part of his account from Matthew. This does not show such a literal fulfilment of the prophecy, but is more probable in itself. The testimony, therefore, of the other three evangelists, and the probability of the thing itself, leads us to conclude that Matthew has falsified in his account in order to make it appear that the prophecy was exactly fulfilled.

In Psalm lxi. 21, we find "They gave me also *gall* for my meat, and in my thirst they gave me *vinegar* to drink." Matthew says that, previously to the crucifixion, they gave Jesus "*vinegar to drink mingled with gall*" (οξος μετα χολης μεμιγμενον) xxvii. 34. But Mark calls the drink "*wine mingled with myrrh*" (σμυρνηςμιγμενον οινον). John says nothing of this first offering of drink, but agrees with Matthew and Mark in mentioning another, of the sponge filled with vinegar immediately before the death of Jesus. Luke says only in a loose manner, "and the soldiers also mocked him, coming to him and offering him vinegar," xxiii. 36; which may refer to the second offering. Matthew therefore disagrees with Mark, and is not confirmed by the others, as to the precise kind of drink offered before the crucifixion; but he makes his account correspond exactly with the Psalm.*

Matthew says that Judas received *thirty pieces of silver* for betraying Jesus, and afterwards brought them again to the priests, *who bought with them the potter's field*. "Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy the prophet,† saying, And they took the *thirty pieces of silver*, the price of him that was valued, whom

they of the children of Israel did value, and gave them for the potter's field, as the Lord appointed me." Mark, Luke, and John, merely state that Judas received money, without mentioning thirty pieces; and say nothing about a potter's field. But Luke, in the Acts, says, Judas himself bought a field. Matthew, then, differs materially from the others, the differences being such as make his account agree well with what he quotes as a prophecy.

Since Matthew appears anxious throughout his work to exhibit the fulfilment of prophecy by Jesus, it seems pretty clear that his zeal led him, in these instances, to tamper with the facts. Other objects, then, might lead him to do the same in other places. Allowance must be made for many inaccuracies in every history; but a few instances only of wilful perversion are enough to bring a writer into discredit.

In the genealogy of Christ, he says that each of the epochs from Abraham to David, from David to the captivity, and from the captivity to Christ, consisted of fourteen generations each. The last series contains only thirteen, unless Jeconiah, who ends the second, be counted again. This might be an oversight: but in the second, he omits four kings or generations—Ahaziah, Joash, Amaziah, and farther on, Jehoiakim, which makes his number exact. It is difficult to consider this also as a mere oversight. Yet since the name of Ahaziah or Ochozias is very much like that of his great grandson Uziah or Ozias, the excuse might be admitted on behalf of an historian of known scrupulousness.

Matthew says that "Herod slew all the children that were in Bethlehem, and in all the coasts thereof, from two years old and under," ii. 16; which is not mentioned by the other three evangelists, nor by Josephus, although the latter is very minute in detailing the barbarities of Herod. The conduct attributed to Herod is in itself absurd: he makes no search after the one dangerous child, to whom the visit of the wise men must have afforded a good

and that those chapters were originally part of Jeremiah. Jerome said he had seen the text concerning the potter's field in an apocryphal book of Jeremiah. In Matt. xxvii, t. iv., p. 134.

Campbell's translation is, "They made him ride." Improved version, "And he sat thereon." Rosenmüller compares this passage to Jud. xii. 7, "Jephtha was buried in the cities of Gilead," i.e., one of them.

† In our copies the passage is in Zechariah xi. 12, 13, but rather different from Matthew's quotation. The resemblance of the last five chapters of Zechariah to Jeremiah in style and subject, and the unsuitableness of some parts to the time of the former, (see ch. x. 10, 11,) would lead us to think that Matthew was here correct as to the name of the book,

clue, but slays the children of a whole town and the adjoining country in a mass. It is inconceivable that any fit of passion could lead a politic old tyrant, like Herod, to indulge in such costly cruelty. And how could Josephus, who has filled thirty-seven chapters with the history of Herod, omit all allusion to such a wholesale murder? Lardner supposes that Josephus wilfully suppressed this; which is rather hard upon Josephus, since Mark, Luke, John, and all other historians, are as silent as he is.

Matthew says that Pilate's wife sent to him, saying, "Have nothing to do with that just man, for I have suffered many things in a dream because of him;" which is not confirmed by the other three, nor agreed with Pilate's conduct.

He says that many bodies of saints arose during the crucifixion, and appeared to many, which is not confirmed by the others, nor alluded to in the Acts or Epistles.

Some additional light will be thrown on Matthew's veracity, when we come to examine Mark.

He sometimes embellishes his story with statements which he could not have known to be true, as when he relates the words used by Jesus, whilst his only three companions, Peter, James, and John, were asleep. He also appears to introduce much of the views and opinions of his own time into the discourses which he attributes to Jesus. For instance—

x. 23, *Ye shall not be gone over the cities of Israel, until the Son of man be come.*

✠ This would have been unintelligible in the mouth of Jesus, for he was already with his disciples, and, according to Matthew himself, had not yet said anything concerning his death and resurrection. But the expectation of his re-appearance, commonly called the coming of the Lord, was very general about the year 68.

xi. 12, *And from the days of John the Baptist until now, the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force.*

The mode of expression implies that the days of John the Baptist were at a considerable distance from the time at which the thought occurred. It is very applicable to the continual violence

which Judea suffered before and during the war, and seems intended to keep up the hopes of the Jewish Christians, that the kingdom of heaven though so long deferred, would still be manifested in the chosen land.

xviii. 17, *If he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church; but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man or a publican.*

In the lifetime of Jesus there was no Church (*εκκλησια*) or organised society of his followers: and the Jewish assemblies were called synagogues. But the term was in current use in the year 68.

IV. On the other hand, this Gospel has in many parts an air of reality, and, notwithstanding occasional dislocations of the order of events, gives a more clear and connected account than the other three of the progress of Jesus from his baptism to his death. Yet the notices of time and place are in general far from being so complete as one would expect from an eye-witness. There are continual chasms in the itinerary of Jesus; and notwithstanding an apparent endeavour to preserve the connexion of the story by joining the incidents together with such phrases as "At that time"—"And when"—"Then"—"From that time forth," &c., there are so many abrupt transitions, that it is difficult to imagine that the writer could have been travelling companion to Jesus for any length of time, as the disciples are represented to have been. For instance, ch. xv. 21, Jesus goes from thence, Gennesaret, near the sea of Galilee, to the coasts of Tyre and Sidon, a distance of nearly 50 miles, and back again; and nothing is told as to the object or incidents of this journey except the affair of the Syrophenician woman. In mentioning the many journeys of Jesus and his followers about the country, an eye-witness could hardly have avoided giving some particulars about the manner in which they were performed, such as the mode of conveyance, the number of the party, the difficulties from roads and weather, the houses at which they stayed, and the like. Such minutiae, however trifling, are almost inevitably interwoven with the narrations of an eye-witness, although they soon disappear from the story, when it passes into

other hands. In Matthew, they are wanting to such a degree, that we cannot even guess whether Jesus performed his numerous land journeys on foot, or in some sort of carriage. The difference between the narratives of a travelling companion and those of a second-hand narrator is well seen by comparing Luke's account of Paul's latter journeys with Matthew's indistinct sketches of those of Jesus, viz., "He departed from Galilee and came into the coasts of Judea;" "When Jesus came into the coasts of Cesarea, Philippi," &c. The same sort of historical brevity is observable in many of the incidents recorded. Compare, for instance, the cure of the lunatic after the transfiguration with the same story in Mark. Moreover, (if the hypothesis of real miracles be rejected,) both the discourses and incidents are interwoven more closely with fiction than would probably be the case if the writer had been an eye-witness; for such an one, from the vivid impression left by real scenes, would be likely to leave, at least, long-continuous passages clear. Such is the case in the latter part of the Acts, where the stream of consecutive facts present in the writer's mind leaves him little room to introduce things strictly miraculous.

This internal evidence against the supposition that Matthew the apostle was the author of this Gospel, seems to overbalance the scanty testimony of the Fathers on its behalf. Upon the whole, the most that we can conclude seems to be, that it was the work of some one who became a member of the Jewish church before the war, and who collected the relics of the acts and sayings of Jesus reported by Matthew the Apostle, introducing some traditions which he found elsewhere, and filling up copiously from his own invention. His aim was, probably, to do honour to Jesus and the common cause, to strengthen the church under the trying circumstances of the times, and to be the author of a work which should be generally acceptable to his brethren. That such a man should not always adhere to strict truth seems quite consistent with human nature, since in the subsequent times and in the Christian church, we find pious men and sincere believers allowing themselves to countenance palpable falsehoods.

Irenæus, arguing against the heretics, who only allowed thirty-one years to Christ's life, and the last alone to his ministry, affirmed that Christ was fifty years old at least at the time of his death; for which he alleges the unanimous testimony of all the old men who had lived with St. John in Asia, some of whom had also heard the same account from the other apostles.

The same Father also asserted, that in the church in his time some had been raised from the dead, and lived afterwards several years.

Speaking of the millennium, he says, "The elders who saw John, the disciple of the Lord, relate that they had heard from him, how that the Lord taught concerning those times, and said, The days will come, in which there shall grow vineyards having each 10,000 vine stocks, and each stock 10,000 branches, each branch 10,000 shoots, each shoot 10,000 bunches, each bunch 10,000 grapes; and each grape squeezed shall yield twenty-five measures of wine; and when any of the saints shall go to pluck a bunch, another bunch will cry out, I am better; take me, and bless the Lord through me. In like manner a grain of wheat sown shall bear 10,000 stalks, each stalk 10,000 grains, and each grain 10,000 pounds of the finest flour; and so all other fruits, seeds, and herbs, in the same proportion, &c. These words Papias, a disciple of St. John, and companion of Polycarp, an ancient man, testifies in writing in his fourth book, and adds, that they are credible to those who believe." Iren. l. 2, c. 33.

Irenæus thus gives the credit of this story to Papias, who was said by Eusebius to be a weak man, and of a very shallow understanding. But Papias speaks for himself thus: "As oft as I met with any one who had conversed with the ancients, I always inquired very diligently after their sayings and doctrines; what Andrew, Peter, Philip, John, and the rest of the Lord's apostles, used to teach. For I was persuaded I could not profit so much by books as by the voice of living witnesses." Euseb. H. E. l. 3, c. 39.

Justin Martyr, speaking of the seventy elders who were shut up in cells without communication with each other, and whose translations of the Scrip-

tures were found to agree verbatim from beginning to end, says, "that he is not telling a fable or forged tale, but that he himself had seen at Alexandria the remains of those very cells in which the translators had been shut up." Cohort. ad Græcos, p. 14.

Tertullian, writing against theatres, says, "An example happened, as the Lord is witness, of a woman who went to the theatre, and came back with a devil in her; whereupon, when the unclean spirit was urged and threatened for having dared to attack one of the faithful, he replied, I have done nothing but what is very fair, for I found her on my own ground." De Spectac. 26. On which Middleton remarks, that although it might be true

that terrors of conscience threw the woman into some disorder, we cannot but suspect that the smart answer of the devil was contrived by Tertullian himself, to enforce his doctrine of the sin and danger of frequenting theatres.

Epiphanius said, that, "in imitation of the miracle at Cana in Galilee, several fountains and rivers in his days were annually turned into wine. A fountain of Cibiya, a city of Caria," says he, "and another at Gerasa in Arabia, prove the truth of this. I myself have drunk out of the fountain of Cibiya, and my brethren out of the other at Gerasa; and many testify the same thing of the river Nile." Adv. Hær. l. 2, c. 30.

ARTICLE III.—ON THE DATE AND CREDIBILITY OF THE GOSPEL OF ST. MARK.

MARK was a follower chiefly of Peter, and probably the same as John Mark, nephew of Barnabas, mentioned as one of the earliest converts. Acts xii. 12; xiii. 5, 13: xv. 37. He wrote his Gospel at Rome. Afterwards, according to Eusebius, Epiphanius, and Jerome, he preached the Gospel in Egypt, and was first bishop of the church at Alexandria.

His Gospel appears to be quoted by Clemens Romanus, A.D. 96.

The first who names him is Papias, A.D. 116, who says, "And this, the presbyter (John) said: Mark being the interpreter of Peter, wrote exactly whatever he remembered, but not in the order in which things were spoken or done by Christ. For he was neither a hearer nor follower of the Lord; but, as I said, afterwards followed Peter, who made his discourses for the profit of those that heard him, but not in the way of a regular history of our Lord's words. Mark, however, committed no mistake in writing some things as they occurred to his memory. For this one thing he made his care, to omit nothing which he had heard, and to say nothing false in what he related."

A.D. 178. Irenæus: "After the death or departure of (εξόδου) of Peter and Paul, Mark, the disciple and interpreter of Peter, delivered to us in writing the

things that had been preached by Peter."

A.D. 194. Clement of Alexandria: "Peter's hearers at Rome, not content with a single hearing, nor with an unwritten instruction in the divine doctrine, entreated Mark, the follower of Peter, that he would leave with them, in writing, a memorial of the doctrine which had been delivered to them by word of mouth: nor did they desist until they had prevailed with him. Thus they were the means of writing the Gospel which is called according to St. Mark. It is said, that when the Apostle knew it, he was pleased with the zeal of the men, and authorized that scripture to be read in the churches." But in another place, according to Eusebius, Clement said, "That when Peter knew of it, he neither forbade nor encouraged it."

A.D. 230. Origen: "The second Gospel is that according to Mark, who wrote it as Peter dictated it to him."

A.D. 315. Eusebius: "Peter, out of an abundance of modesty, thought not himself worthy to write a gospel. But Mark, who was his friend and disciple, is said to have recorded Peter's relations of the acts of Jesus."

A.D. 368. Epiphanius: "Matthew wrote first, and Mark soon after him, being a companion of Peter at Rome."

These are the chief early testimonies, and they are contradictory as to the important point, whether Peter knew of and sanctioned what Mark wrote. It appears from the earlier ones, that this Gospel was only published after Peter's death, which, according to Jerome and Bede, was in A.D. 68.

This agrees very well with the internal evidence; for this Gospel is evidently written by one who had Matthew's before him, since he follows him

in the turn of his sentences, and even in the very words, not only in the discourses, but in the relation of events. He adds, however, a few incidents and additional details plainly gathered from some other source.

This point, that Mark made use of Matthew's Gospel, has such an important bearing on the credibility of the former, that it is worth while to make to some long extracts to prove it.

Matt. iv. 18, And Jesus walking by the sea of Galilee, saw two brethren, Simon called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net (*αμφιβλησπον*) into the sea; for they were fishermen. And he saith unto them, Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men. And they straightway left their nets (*δικτυα*), and followed him. And going out from thence, he saw two other brothers, James the Son of Zebedee and John his brother, in a ship with Zebedee their father, mending their nets: and he called them, and they immediately left their ship and their father, and followed him.

Matt. viii. 2, And behold there came a leper, and made obeisance to him, saying, Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean. And Jesus put forth his hand, and touched him, saying, I will; be thou clean. And immediately his leprosy was cleansed. And Jesus saith unto him, See thou tell no man; but go thy way; shew thyself to the priest, and offer the gift that Moses commanded for a testimony unto them.

Matt. ix. 9, And as Jesus passed forth from thence, he saw a man named Matthew sitting at the receipt of custom (*το τελωνιον*); and he saith unto him, Follow me. And he arose and followed him. And it came to pass, as Jesus sat at meat in the house, behold, many publicans and sinners came and sat down with him and his disciples.

Mark i. 16, Now, as he walked by the sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and Andrew his brother, casting a net (*αμφιβλησπον*) into the sea: for they were fishermen. And Jesus said unto them, Follow me, and I will make you to become fishers of men. And straightway they forsook their nets (*δικτυα*), and followed him; and when he had gone a little further thence, he saw James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother, who also were in the ship mending their nets. And straightway he called them: and they left their father Zebedee in the ship with the hired servants (one word, *μισθωτων*), and went after him.

Mark, i. 40, And there came a leper to him, beseeching him, and kneeling down to him, saying unto him, If thou wilt, thou canst make me clean. And Jesus, moved with compassion, put forth his hand, and touched him, and saith unto him, I will; be thou clean. And as soon as he had spoken immediately the leprosy departed from him, and he was cleansed. And he straitly charged him, and forthwith sent him away; and saith unto him, See thou say nothing to any man, but go thy way; shew thyself to the priest, and offer for thy cleansing the things which Moses commanded for a testimony unto them.

Mark ii. 14, And as he passed by, he saw Levi, the son of Alphæus sitting at the custom house (*το τελωνιον*), and said unto him, Follow me. And he arose and followed him. And it came to pass, that as Jesus sat at meat in his house, many publicans and sinners sat also together with Jesus and his disciples: for there were many, and they followed him.

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A REFUTATION OF THE SUPERNATURAL ORIGIN OF CHRISTIANITY.

ARTICLE III.—ON THE DATE AND CREDIBILITY OF THE GOSPEL OF ST. MARK*
(concluded).

Matt. xiii. 1, The same day went Jesus out of the house, and sat by the sea side. And great multitudes were gathered together unto him, so that he went into a ship and sat; and the whole multitude stood on the shore. And he spake many things unto them into parables, saying, Behold a sower went forth to sow; and when he sowed, some fell by the way side, &c.

Matt. xiv. 22, And straightway Jesus constrained his disciples to get into a ship, and to go before him unto the other side, while he sent the multitude away, and when he had sent the multi- away, he went up into a mountain privately to pray.

Matt. xiii. 33, Another parable spake he unto them (then follow at length the parables of the leaven, the treasure hid in a field, the pearls, the net cast into the sea, &c., and the explanation of the tares to the disciples).

And whoever will take the trouble to compare the two throughout, especially in the Greek,† will probably feel little doubt that Mark had Matthew's Gospel before him, and formed his own

* These articles are abridged from "Hennel's Inquiry concerning the Origin of Christianity." The work to which reference has previously been made.

† The phrase in Matt. xxiv. 22, *ὅταν σωθῇ πᾶσα σὰρξ*, literally "then should not be saved all flesh," is allowed to be very remarkable Greek. The same occurs word for word in Mark. For more evidence of this kind, see Michaelis on Composition of the first three Gospels.

Mark iv. 1, And, behold, he began again to teach them by the sea side: and there was gathered unto him a great multitude, so that he entered into a ship, and sat in the sea; and the whole multitude was by the sea, on the land: and he taught them many things by parables, and said unto them in his doctrine, Hearken; behold there went out a sower to sow; and it came to pass as he sowed, some fell by the way side, &c.

Mark vi. 45, And straightway he constrained his disciples to get into the ship, and to go before to the other side, over against Bethsaida, while he sent away the people. And when he had sent them away, he departed into a mountain to pray.

Mark iv. 33, And with many such parables spake he the word unto them, as they were able to hear it. But without a parable spake he not unto them; and when they were alone, he expounded all things unto his disciples.

mainly from it,* omitting and altering occasionally at his own discretion, and introducing in convenient places his own separate stock of information, obtained from Peter or others; which, however, is very small in comparison with the whole, being chiefly the cure of a deaf and dumb man, vii. 31—37; the cure of a blind man at Bethsaida, viii. 22—26; the story of the widow's mite, xii. 41, and some additional par-

* Matthew's order of events is much dislocated in Mark as far as Matt. xiv., although the separate parts agree very well; but from that chapter the two narratives correspond to the end.

ticals concerning the raising of Jairus's daughter, casting the dæmons into the swine, the cure of the lunatic after the transfiguration, and the entry into Jerusalem.

Augustine called Mark the epitomizer of Matthew: and it is true that he shortens the whole narrative by leaving out many of the parables and long discourses. But each separate relation is generally longer; not by the introduction of fresh ideas, but by a repetition of those in the original, and by frequent little obvious explanations. Although plainly following Matthew, he seems frequently to endeavour to amplify his original, so as to render it more exact and forcible: hence, like most second-hand narrators, earnest to set off their story, he falls into a prolix style. Instances—†

Mark iv. 30, "And he said, *whereunto shall we liken the kingdom of God? or with what comparison shall we compare it?* It is like a grain of mustard-seed, which when it is sown in the earth is less than all the seeds *that be in the earth.* But when it is sown it groweth up," &c.

Mark vi. 49, "But when they saw him walking upon the sea, they supposed it had been a spirit, and cried out (*For they all saw him and were troubled*); and immediately he talked with them, and saith unto them," &c.

Mark viii. 1. *In those days the multitude being very great, and having nothing to eat,* Jesus called his disciples to him, and saith unto them, I have compassion on the multitude, because they have now been with me three days, and have nothing to eat. And if I send them away fasting to their own houses, they will faint by the way: *for divers of them came from afar.*

Mark ii. 18, And the disciples of John, *and of the Pharisees, used to fast, and they come,* and say unto him, Why do the disciples of John and of the Pharisees fast, but thy disciples fast not? &c.

In some places he alters and omits parts of Matthew, apparently with a view to render the narrative more palatable to Gentile readers, who formed an important part of the church at Rome.

† The words in italics have nothing answering to them in Matthew.

Most of Matthew's quotations from the prophets are omitted.

Matt. xv. In the story of the Canaanitish woman, Jesus says, "I am not sent, but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel." Mark leaves this out altogether. "Then she fell down before him saying, Lord, help me. But he answered, and said, It is not meet to take the children's bread, and to cast it to dogs." Mark softens this for the Gentiles, in this manner: *Let the children first be filled,* for it is not meet to take the children's bread, and to cast it unto the dogs.

Matt. xxiv. 20, "But pray you that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the Sabbath day." Mark has omitted the last clause.

Matt. xvii. 10, Jesus says that Elias was already come. "Then the disciples understood that he spake unto them of John the Baptist." Mark omits this explanation, so that it must be very doubtful to his readers who the Elias spoken of was. The point was chiefly interesting to Jews.

Matt. x. Jesus commands the twelve, saying, "Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not. But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, and as ye go, preach, saying, the kingdom of heaven is at hand." Mark omits all this, so that in his account (ch. vi.) it is not at all clear what the commission to the disciples was.

Matt. xix. 28, And Jesus said unto them, "Verily, I say unto you, that ye who have followed me in the regeneration, when the Son of Man shall sit on the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel." Mark leaves this out, and proceeds with the rest of the promise, x. 29.

Amongst minor alterations also, the text in Matt. xii. 30, "He that is not with me is against me, and he that gathereth not with me, scattereth abroad," is omitted by Mark, whilst the context closely agrees.* This is one indication out of many that it was

* He has altered Matt. xiii. 15, a quotation from Isaiah from the mouth of Jesus, "Lest they be converted, and I should heal them," into "lest they be converted, and their sins be forgiven them." Mark iv. 12.

Mark who borrowed from Matthew, rather than the contrary; for it appears more probable that Mark should have omitted such a text in such a place, than that Matthew should have supplied it. Of the same sort is the application of the two sons of Zebedee. Matthew says the mother spoke for the sons; Mark, that the sons spoke themselves. It seems more likely that Mark should have simplified the first account, than that Matthew should have arbitrarily introduced the mother. The variations in the two are chiefly omissions by Mark, to most of which this argument seems to apply. Besides, the whole current of external testimony is in favour of Matthew's having written first.

It appears, then, that Mark had not so great a respect for what Matthew had written as to prevent him from altering it at his own discretion. The instances hitherto cited are chiefly in discourses attributed to Jesus; but he was not at all more scrupulous with respect to Matthew's facts, and even some rather prominent ones.

He omits the miraculous birth and the fight into Egypt; yet begins his work with these words, "the *beginning* of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God." Concerning the temptation, he says only, "The spirit driveth him into the wilderness, and he was there forty days tempted of Satan: and was with the wild beasts; and the angels ministered unto him;" omitting the journey to the top of the temple, and of the mountain.

He omits Peter's casting himself into the sea, Matt. xiv. 28—31; Christ's promise of the keys to Peter, xvi. 20; and his direction to him to pay the tribute from the fish's mouth, xvii. 24—27; although in the two former cases, at least, he appears to copy the context. Chrysostom concluded that Peter must have forbidden him to mention these things from modesty; but there appears no backwardness to do honour to Peter in this Gospel. See Mark i. 36; xiii. 3; xxi. 7; on which occasion Peter is not named by the other Evangelists.

He omits the dream of Pilate's wife, the resurrection of the saints, and the earthquake during the crucifixion; although in each case he agrees closely with the context. In consequence of the last omission, the 39th verse, ch. xv.

becomes somewhat illogical, for it attributes the centurion's exclamation, "Truly this man was the son of God," to Jesus's uttering a cry and expiring; which was not so good a reason for such a conviction in a Roman soldier as Matthew's earthquake.

Why did Mark choose to suppress these things? Not because he disliked the marvellous, for he has admitted abundance of other miracles; nor because he was in haste, for he has lengthened many parts of Matthew, and added some things of his own; moreover, one would think that such important miracles deserved a preference. It is difficult to avoid concluding, that he omitted them because he did not believe them, and did not expect to be believed if he related them. He had heard Peter, and was writing a book for the use of those who had heard him also. The other parts of Matthew, which he transcribed or epitomized, were probably somewhat corroborated by Peter's preaching, and by the traditions carried to the church at Rome; but for the passages in question, Mark judged that Matthew had not sufficient authority; that it would be at once seen they were not sanctioned by Peter or by any traditions of repute; and from conscientiousness or prudence he determined that his work should not be encumbered with them.

It is impossible to regard Mark's suppression of these passages otherwise than as a tacit condemnation of Matthew. In later times, when the means of ascertaining the truth of each story had diminished, and the whole four Gospels came to be believed in a mass, as resting upon the same authority, divine inspiration, these same questionable passages have been favourite ones with Christians, as proving most strikingly the miraculous character of Jesus. The slight put upon them by Mark seems therefore to proceed from his greater proximity to the time when they were written, which gave him better means than others could have of judging of their truth. Mark's example, then, warns all readers of Matthew, that the latter is not to be implicitly trusted.

On the other hand, the parts of Matthew which are copied by Mark acquire thereby some additional evi-

dence in their favour; which, however, only amounts to this, that Mark believed them, or considered them worth repeating. But this is far from making up sufficient testimony to establish a miracle, for Mark was not an eye-witness; but having undertaken to write a gospel, was obliged, when his memory of Peter's preaching furnished too scanty materials, to collect from elsewhere; and it is allowed that Matthew's Gospel, with all its fictions, was probably the best connected narrative then existing of the life of Christ. Besides, admitting that there may be some parts of Mark which confirm Matthew, although not borrowed from him, both Evangelists may have depended upon some tradition which itself had no good foundation.

In some of the accounts of miracles, where Mark inserts additional particulars, they render the miracle more doubtful than as it stands in Matthew; as in the account of the barren fig-tree. Matthew would make it appear that the tree withered *at once* when Jesus spoke; but from Mark we learn it was only found withered the next day. So also in the case of the lunatic after the transfiguration: Mark's account shows that the demon convulsed the man *after* the words were spoken; a very im-

portant point, which does not appear in Matthew. And the additional miracles inserted by Mark, the cure of the deaf and dumb man, ch. vii., and of the blind man at Bethsaida, ch. viii., are very different from the instantaneous miracles in Matthew.

Upon the whole, the study of Mark's Gospel leaves the impression of an honest writer, who did not insert stories of his own invention, but only such as he had received from others and considered credible; and who did not, even in these, suppress unfavourable particulars when they were within his knowledge. The warmth of narration led him frequently to exaggerate and to embellish upon the materials before him; but not more than has been done by many historians of good credit, since the minute particulars filled up by him, are, in general, only such as would be suggested by the belief of the main facts.

The external testimony tends to shew that this Gospel was written soon after Matthew's; and the internal agrees with it, for no new views appear in it; the distress of Jerusalem, and the persecutions of the church, are dwelt upon so much, as to shew that it was written at a time when these were still the most interesting topics.

ARTICLE IV.—ON THE DATE AND CREDIBILITY OF THE GOSPEL OF ST. LUKE.

THE prefaces to this Gospel and the Acts shew that both proceed from the same author, and the earliest traditions agree that he was Luke, the companion of Paul, mentioned Col. iv. 14; 2 Tim. iv. 11; Philem. 24. There is some reason for supposing that he was the same as Silas.

The pronoun *we* first occurs in the narrative of the Acts, at ch. xvi. 10. "We endeavoured to go into Macedonia." The only companions of St. Paul at this time appear to have been Silas and Timothy. (See xv. 40; xvi. 3, 4, 6.) In this case either St. Paul, Silas, or Timothy wrote the Acts.

It was neither Timothy, nor Paul himself, ch. xx. 4. "And there accompanied him (Paul) into Asia, Sopater of Berea....and Timotheus, &c. These going before, tarried for us at Troas."

Also ch. xx. 13, "And we went before to ship, and sailed into Assos, there intending to take in Paul."

Therefore Silas was the writer. Wherever the pronoun *we* occurs, throughout the Acts, there is no objection to supposing that Silas was of the company. The name Silas, or Silvanus, has nearly the same meaning as Lucas, or or Lucanus, the one being derived from *Silva*, a wood, and the other from *Lucas*, a grove; each being probably merely a latinized form of the author's original Greek or Hebrew name.

This Gospel, like the others, is not alluded to in any of the speeches in the Acts, nor in the Epistles.*

* John the Baptist's preaching is mentioned Acts xiii. 25, and the Lord's supper 1 Cor. xi. 23, in words agreeing very nearly

A.D. 96. Clement of Rome, has a passage agreeing exactly with Luke xvii. 2; but nearly the same sentence is in Mark.

A.D. 140. Justin Martyr mentions the visit of Gabriel to the Virgin Mary, in the words of Luke i. 35—38; and Christ's agony in the words of Luke xxii. 42; both which texts have no parallel one in the other Gospels. He does not mention Luke by name, but frequently speaks of the Gospels or memoirs composed by the Apostles and their companions, as his authority.

A.D. 178. Irenæus is the first who names Luke as the author of a Gospel. After speaking of Mark, he says, "And Luke, the companion of Paul, put down in a book the Gospel preached by him."—"But the Gospel according to Luke being of a priestly character, begins with Zacharias the priest, offering incense to God."—"But if any one rejects Luke, as if he did not know the truth, he will be convicted of throwing away the Gospel, of which he professeth to be a disciple. For there are many and those very necessary parts of the Gospel, which we know by his means."

A.D. 194. Clement of Alexandria (according to Eusebius) "had a tradition that the Gospels containing the genealogies were first written."

A.D. 230. Origen. The third Gospel is that according to Luke, the Gospel commended by Paul, published for the sake of the Gentile converts."

A.D. 392. Jerome. "The third evangelist is Luke, the physician, a Syrian of Antioch, who was a disciple of the apostle Paul, and published his Gospel in the countries of Achaia and Bœotia."

A.D. 596. Isidore of Seville. "Matthew wrote his gospel first in Judea; then Mark in Italy; Luke the third, in Achaia; John the last, in Asia."

The most prevalent opinion, then, was, that Luke's Gospel was written the third in order of time; which agrees well with the internal evidence, for, on comparing the three, there is much appearance that Luke made use of both Matthew and Mark.

The preface, says, "Forasmuch as

with Luke. But neither passage is introduced as a quotation; and it seems more likely that Luke should have borrowed from Paul, than the contrary.

many have taken in hand to set forth in order a declaration of those things which are most surely believed among us, even as they delivered them unto us, which were from the beginning eye-witnesses and ministers of the word; it seemed good to me also, having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first, to write unto thee in order, most excellent Theophilus, that thou mightest know the certainty of those things wherein thou hast been instructed."

Thus Luke does not state precisely whence he obtained his information. His words certainly do not imply that he copied from some of the many who went before him; but neither do they disclaim it so distinctly as to set aside the internal evidence of his having done so. Matthew and Mark are the only Gospels extant which could have been amongst the many alluded to; and it seems very evident, on examination, that Luke drew largely from both, and especially from Mark. Origen argued that Luke could not intend to include Matthew and Mark amongst the many, because they did not "take in hand to write," but wrote. Most Christian writers have been anxious to prove the same point, but apparently without any better argument. (See Lardner, vol. v. p. 383.) The expression does not imply any disrespect on the part of Luke towards his predecessors, for the word "also" makes it apply to his own work. He probably considered that Matthew and Mark had still left room for a more complete and elegantly written life of Christ. And, in fact, Luke's Gospel is more full than either of those two, and, as is generally allowed, written in better Greek.

Compare Luke iv. 1—12, with Matt. iv. 1—11.

Luke iv. 38—43, with Mark i. 29—38.

Luke v. 12—15, with Mark i. 40—45, and Matt. viii. 1—4.

Luke v. 18—38, with Mark ii. 3—22, and Matt. ix. 2—8.

Luke vi. 1—11, with Mark ii. 23; iii. 6.

Luke viii. 26—39, with Mark v. 1—20.

Luke ix. 23—36, with Mark viii. 34; ix. 10.

Luke xxii. 7—13, with Mark xiv. 12—16.

When his two predecessors have the same story, Luke generally seems to prefer transcribing from Mark, but occasionally supplies an expression from Matthew: Luke xx. 8—47, Mark xi. 33, xii. 40, compared with Matt. xxi. 27, xxii. 46. Here, where Mark omits, Luke omits also, but verse 18 he seems to have supplied from Matthew. See also Luke xx. 45—47, agreeing closely with Mark xii. 38—40, whilst Matthew xxii. 5—14, is much longer; Luke xviii. 15, compared with Mark x. 13, and Matt. xix. 13.

In order to account for the agreements between the first three Gospels, Eichhorn and Bishop Marsh maintained that there must have been an original Aramaic document which was the common source of them all. But there appears to be no historical evidence of the existence of such a document. The translator of Schleiermacher's Critical Essay on Luke, says, "The German critic's ingenious and specious investigation of this supposed document, and the tempting facilities it offered for the solution of the problem, seem to have dazzled the judgment of his followers, and to have prevented him from scrutinizing the groundwork of his whole fabric with his usual vigilance. In the dissertation itself the probability of such a document having ever existed is not thought deserving of any discussion." Translator's introduction, p. 25. Yet, not to insist upon this point, the difficulties of explaining the agreements on Eichhorn's hypothesis were found to be so great, that in a later work he published an improved form of it, viz. that *four different copies* of the supposed Aramaic original must have formed the basis of the three Gospels.

Schleiermacher himself says, "Without assenting to all the arguments which Hug opposes to Eichhorn's hypothesis of an original Gospel, I think he has, upon the whole succeeded in making the thing improbable in the eyes of all unprejudiced persons. Introduct. p. 2.—"For my part, it is quite enough to prevent me from receiving Eichhorn's theory, that I am to figure to myself our evangelists surrounded by five or six open rolls or books, and that too in different languages, looking by turns from one into another, and writing a compilation from them. I fancy

myself in a German study of the eighteenth or nineteenth century, rather than in the primitive age of Christianity." Ibid. p. 6.

Mill says, "That Luke's Gospel was published after those of Matthew and Mark, appears, on the comparison of three, clearer than light. For nothing is plainer than that Luke borrowed the very light phrases and expressions of Matthew and Mark, nay, whole paragraphs word for word." Mill, Proleg. p. 116.

Wetstein says, "That Luke took many things from Matthew, and more from Mark, appears on collating them." De Luca ap. T. Gr. tom. i. p. 643.

Michaelis says, "It is wholly impossible that three historians, who have no connexion, either mediate, or immediate, with each other, should harmonize as Matthew, Mark, and Luke do." —*Origin of the first three Gospels*, ch. i.

There are, however, a great many stories and parables in Luke not found in the other two; it therefore seems likely that he took these from some of the other writings which he alludes to, now lost, or that he selected them from the current traditions. Also he might have learned some things himself from the original eye-witnesses; but as he does not say which these are, it is impossible to discover what parts of his Gospel have this superior authority.

The variations from and additions to, the Gospels of Matthew and Mark, shew that Luke possessed sources of information which in some cases he preferred even to those evangelists. For instance, his story of the woman with the alabaster box of ointment, vii. 36, is very different from that in the other two, although the points of agreement shew that the same fact forms the foundation of all the three stories. His genealogy and history of Christ before his baptism contradict Matthew; and his version of the parable of the talents differs widely from Matthew's.

From as large a collection of materials as he could obtain, it appears that he intended to write in order a history of Jesus from the first, but that he soon found the task too difficult with respect to the order; for, after the first few chapters, his narrative becomes so jumbled and confused, that the reader can form no clear idea of the course of

events. It has the appearance of a mass of anecdotes and sayings, put down as they came to the author's notice, with very little regard to time or place, instead of a regular narrative, like Matthew's. Nearly the whole of Matthew and Mark may be traced in different parts of Luke, but much cut up and displaced. It seems probable that he endeavoured to accommodate as large a portion as he could of those two to his other materials; but finding that some sayings and facts were thus left out, in his anxiety to make his Gospel complete, he inserted the fragments where he could (see Luke xvi. 16—18; xvii. 1—10; xi. 34—36). That his order, rather than Matthew's, is generally erroneous, is shown by the inappropriateness of the context, and his want of clearness as to time and place; for instance:—

Luke xii. 54, The reference to the sign of the times is here made abruptly, and to the people, who consequently seem to be called hypocrites without occasion. But in Matthew xvi. 2, it is in answer to the Pharisees who had been asking a sign from heaven.

Luke xiii. 34, The lamentation over Jerusalem is introduced long before Jesus's journey thither; but in Matt. xxiii. 37, it occurs in a discourse at Jerusalem.

Luke xxii. 30, The promise of twelve thrones is put in a speech rebuking the disciples' desire of greatness, at the last supper. But in Matthew xix. 28, it is in answer to Peter's inquiry "what shall we have?" on the approach to Jerusalem.

Luke xi. 37, The woes against the Pharisees are here represented as spoken by Jesus at the house of a Pharisee who had invited him to dinner. But in Matthew xxiii. they are part of a public discourse.

Luke ix. 51, "He stedfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem." x. 38, "It came to pass as they went, that he entered into a certain village: and a certain woman named Martha received him into her house." This must have been at Bethany, near Jerusalem, since Martha's house was there. Yet Luke seems afterwards to have forgotten or to be ignorant that he had brought Jesus so near to Jerusalem, for at ch. xiii. 21, he represents him as still in

Herod's jurisdiction, i.e., in Galilee: and at ch. xvii. 11, he says, "And it came to pass, as he went to Jerusalem, that he passed through the midst of Samaria and Galilee." This shows not only the incorrectness of Luke's order of events, but that he attended very little to the locality of the scenes which he was describing.

The attempt to preserve the order of the narrative appears to be continued to the end of ch. x.; for, so far, one incident is generally connected with the preceding by some remark indicating the interval of time; vi. 1, "and it came to pass on the second sabbath after the first;" 13, "and when it was day;" vii. 1, 11; viii. 1; ix. 1, 28, 37, 57; x. 1, 21, 38. But from the beginning of ch. xi. the notices of this kind are less clear and frequent: the reader has no means of judging when and where the events happen, further than that they are in a certain place, in the house of a certain Pharisee, &c. On arriving at that part of his work, Luke seems to have grown tired of the task he had undertaken of setting forth his materials in order, and to have been satisfied to dispose of the rest in the form of miscellaneous memoirs, until he comes to the arrival at Jericho, ch. xix.

In some places he appears to have copied carelessly, as in the story of the blind beggar, cured near Jericho. Mark says, "they came to Jericho," and "as he went out of Jericho," the miracle was done. Luke relates it as done when he came "nigh unto Jericho:" whilst so many of Luke's expressions agree with Mark's in the rest of the story, that it is difficult to suppose that he did not borrow from him. The oversight might easily be made by one endeavouring to condense Mark's style. Luke here also appears to prefer his authority to that of Matthew, who says, that there were *two* blind men.

The destruction of Jerusalem is introduced by Luke, with these additional particulars,—"they shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled;" whereas Matthew does not carry on his description to what took place after the siege. This confirms the opinion that Luke's Gos-

pel was written somewhat later than Matthew's. Besides, Matthew says, "immediately after those days shall the sun be darkened, and the sign of the Son of Man appear in heaven," &c. Luke only limits the term of the prophecy's fulfilment to "this generation," which variation agrees well with the supposition that Luke wrote rather later than Matthew, and, consequently, had seen that the sign did not come *immediately* after the fall of Jerusalem.

Upon the whole, Luke was an industrious compiler: he made a large collection of stories concerning Christ from what he had heard or found written, and put them into good Greek for the use of Theophilus. But such a work adds very little to the evidence of the facts themselves—less even than Mark's; for he was a follower of Peter, an eye-witness; whilst Luke only followed Paul; and he does not say he learned his facts from the eye-witnesses themselves, which he surely would have done, if he could; for that, at least, was necessary to set his pretensions on a level with those of the writers before him. But he merely says, "he had perfect understanding of all things from the first," an assertion which he must know would procure to his work less authority than if he could have said, that he had his information from Peter, or Andrew, or James. But, since the fact appears to be that he borrowed chiefly from previous writings,* the phrase was as good an one as could be found for a preface, consistently with truth.

The best vindication that Lardner can find for Luke is, that there must have been two Theudas, and that Josephus must have omitted the first (vol. i. p. 425). But it is not likely that so minute an historian should have omitted any notable attempt at insurrection; and the speech implies that it was so, by classing it with that of Judas of Galilee (A.D. 6 or 7). The very grossness of Luke's blunder, in placing Theudas *before* Judas, that is, fifty years wrong, at least, has been

* Schleiermacher, although he does not admit that Luke copied from Matthew and Mark, says of him, "He is, from beginning to end, no more than the compiler and arranger of documents which he found in existence."—*Crit. Essay*, p. 313.

used as an argument that he could not have committed it. But events in any country might easily become misplaced by half a century in the mind of a foreigner. It would not be surprising to find a Frenchman so inaccurate in his remembrance of English history as to imagine that the Manchester massacre occurred before Lord George Gordon's riots.

Some have supposed that Matthew and Luke wrote first, and that Mark copied from them both: and it is true that this hypothesis would also account very well for most of the agreements between the three. But, besides, the other reasons adduced in favour of Mark's priority, it would be difficult to explain why he should have preferred following Luke in the manner of relating separate stories, and yet have omitted nearly all the stories which Luke has in addition to Matthew.

In either case, the inference occurs, that the three Evangelists are not independent witnesses. Le Clerc, indeed, said, "They seem to think more justly, who say that the first three Evangelists were unacquainted with each other's design. In that way greater weight accrues to their testimony. When witnesses agree who have first laid their heads together, they are suspected." And Lardner adds, "I have all my days read and admired the first three Evangelists, as independent witnesses; and I know not how to forbear ranking the other opinion among those bold as well as groundless assertions,* in which critics too often indulge themselves, without considering the consequences."

* The objections of Lardner are, that no Christian writers before Augustine appear to have supposed that the first three Evangelists had seen each other's Gospels; that it was not suitable to the character of any of the Evangelists to transcribe another historian; that there would have appeared no need to repeat things already written; that there are many seeming contradictions and numberless small varieties in the three, also some omissions, and some things peculiar to each. See *Hist. of Apost.*, chap. x.

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A REFUTATION OF THE SUPERNATURAL ORIGIN OF CHRISTIANITY.

ARTICLE IV.—ON THE DATE AND CREDIBILITY OF THE GOSPEL OF ST. LUKE.* (*Concluded.*)

It is undeniable that the repetition of Matthew's statements, by writers so near to him in time, and who had access to some of the original eye-witnesses, does, in a great measure, confirm those statements; and the more so, as Mark and Luke appear to have exercised some discretion in the selection. Therefore, there is a strong probability that the accordant portions of these three histories contain a tolerably correct outline of the chief events of Christ's life; but some errors might also find their way into all three by the same channels, viz. the mistakes or inventions of the first writer, or the traditions on which they all depended. In the case of miracles in particular, it is to be considered whether the same motives which led Matthew to exaggerate or receive exaggerations, might not have led men, circumstanced so similarly to himself as Mark and Luke were, to repeat a part of his statements. They have shaken Matthew's general credibility by rejecting some of his most prominent miracles; and it may be questioned whether their own position, as men of the same views and feelings, and defenders of the same cause, enables them to add from their

own credibility what they have taken from him, in the case of the miracles which they confirm.

The most sublime writings frequently proceed from men of inferior literary qualifications, but of warm imaginations, and who write under the pressure of some unusually interesting circumstances. From such men proceeds the simple and energetic narrative style which is universally found the most impressive.† This style belongs eminently to the first three Gospels. The tremendous catastrophe of God's holy city, the violent persecutions to which the elect were exposed, the expectation of the end of the world, and of the coming of the Son of Man on the clouds of heaven, gave to the minds of the Christians an elevation and solemnity which became impressed on their writings of that period, and thus have appeared to countenance the claim set up for them of divine inspiration.

† The Scriptures of the Old Testament, like most writings of an early period of civilization, are chiefly in this style. "God said, Let there be light, and there was light." And these Scriptures were the principal models for the early Christians.

ARTICLE V.—ON THE DATE AND CREDIBILITY OF THE GOSPEL OF ST. JOHN.

THE other three Gospels agree very well in the style of the discourses attributed to Christ, which are chiefly

parables and short pithy sayings. They represent him as beginning his public preaching in Galilee, proceeding after some time to Jerusalem, and suffering there. The chief topic dwelt upon is the approach of the kingdom of heaven; and they contain much concerning the fall of Jerusalem.

* These articles are abridged from "Hennel's Inquiry concerning the Origin of Christianity." The work to which reference has previously been made.

But the Gospel of John is of a very different character. The discourses of Christ are here long controversial orations without any parables: he is made to journey from Galilee to Jerusalem, and back again, many times; the kingdom of heaven is nearly lost sight of; the fall of Jerusalem never alluded to; and we have, instead of these, several new subjects, viz., the incarnation of the word or logos in the person of Christ; his coming down from heaven; his relationship to the Father; and the promise of the Comforter or Holy Spirit. Also, with few exceptions, a new set of miracles is attributed to Christ.

From the resemblance of style, the author of this Gospel and of the three Epistles appears to be the same. In the first Epistle, he says, that he had been an eye-witness of the word of life. In the last two he calls himself "the elder." There was a John, usually called the elder or presbyter, to distinguish him from John the Apostle, the brother of James; and Papias calls* him also "a disciple of Jesus." But the name "elder" was very commonly given to the heads of the church (1 Pet. v. 1), and might be assumed by John the Apostle. In the Gospel, the writer is often said to be the disciple whom Jesus loved. That this is the same as the brother of James is confirmed by this, that the other three Evangelists often name this John amongst the more confidential disciples of Jesus; whilst the other John, the presbyter mentioned by Papias, does not appear at all. And since the church in general has attributed this Gospel to John the Apostle, there seems to be sufficient reason to believe that he and the beloved disciple were the same. Consequently, this Gospel contains what is equivalent to an assertion that it was written by the Apostle John, and thus differs from the rest in stating its author.

The later date of this Gospel would account in a great measure for the difference of its tone and sentiments from those of the other three. But, besides this difference, there are many glaring inconsistencies in its order and description of events as compared with its predecessors; insomuch that it is difficult to avoid concluding that sometimes

the one, and sometimes the others, are mistaken.

For instance, John i. 43, Jesus goes into Galilee the second day after his baptism, and on the third day (ii. 1) we find him arrived at Cana in Galilee. The others say that immediately after his baptism he remained forty days in the wilderness, Mark i. 12.

John v. 1, Jesus comes up a second time to Jerusalem, before the feeding of the five thousand, of which visit no notice is taken in Matthew, who first mentions Jesus's intention to go up to Jerusalem after that miracle. "From that time forth began Jesus to shew unto his disciples how that he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things, &c." Matt. xvi. 21. This does not agree with the supposition that Jesus had already been twice to Jerusalem since the beginning of his public preaching.

John vi. 21, After Jesus had walked on the sea and entered the ship, "immediately the ship was at the land whither they went." The others lead us to suppose that it reached the place by ordinary sailing. Matt. xiv. 34; Mark vi. 53.

John vii. 10, Another journey to Jerusalem not noticed by the others.

John xii. 17, 18, On his public entry into Jerusalem, the people met him, because they heard that he had raised Lazarus. The others say nothing at all concerning Lazarus, although they describe minutely this entry into Jerusalem and the conduct of the multitude.

John xii. 28, 29, A voice from heaven in the hearing of the people, not noticed by the others.

The additional miracles in this Gospel are mostly of a more bold and marvellous character than those in the others. They are generally represented as done in the most public manner, without the injunctions to secrecy so frequent in the first three Gospels. The conversion of the water into wine, according to this Gospel, was the beginning of Jesus's miracles, and "manifested forth his glory;" it is strange that none of the other histories should hint at it, and that it should first appear in a writing of the year 97. The periodical descent of the angel into the water at Bethesda is not mentioned by any other writer; but this author introduces it, not as a popular notion, but as

* Euseb. H. E., l. 3., c. 29.

a fact which he means to be believed as much as the rest of his story.

Admitting the greater part of this Gospel to have been written or dictated by St. John, about the year 97, for the use of the Ephesian church, we have still no guarantee of the apostle's veracity or correctness of memory. At that time he must have been nearly one hundred years old : his other writings shew that he possessed a vivid imagination ; and it is well known that such persons are apt to mingle truth and falsehood in their narratives even unintentionally. But the apostle was also under the strongest temptation to indulge in fiction. He had been personally attached to Jesus, and believed him to be the Messiah. After the death of his master, the apostle's station in the church prompted him to take a prominent part in spreading the common belief. Interest and ambition, as well as private friendship and religious zeal, urged John to be a strenuous preacher of Jesus the Messiah. If any of the brethren were pressed too hard by unbelievers concerning the proof of the Messiahship of the carpenter's son, it was natural to look to the confidential followers of Jesus himself for assistance. These found it not so easy to convince others as themselves ; for the impression made by the life and character of Jesus could not be easily condensed into an argument fit to oppose to objectors, and the proofs from prophecy appeared to dispassionate observers far-fetched and doubtful. The assertion of his miracles of healing and casting out demons was also liable to objections, since others had pretended to the same powers. Hence the temptations continually to adopt or invent fresh stories of miracles, which might serve in the controversy as more indubitable proofs of a divine mission. In proportion to the distance of time and place from the scene of the original transactions, this species of imposition became more easy. Accordingly, we find but few allusions to miracles in the Epistles ; abundant accounts of them in the four gospels ; and in this last gospel, published much later than the others, and at Ephesus, more bold and gross stories of miracles,* as well as

more confident appeals to them, than in any other. The apostle had been for sixty-four years accustomed to hear exaggerated and fictitious accounts of the acts of Christ, and had become convinced of their efficacy in promoting the faith of the church. For, since he puts this saying into the mouth of Christ, (John iv. 48,) "Unless ye see wonders and signs, ye will not believe," we may infer that he himself found it necessary to supply his hearers at least with *narratives* of such wonders and signs. And at that distance of time, amongst the foreigners of Ephesus, there was no one capable of controverting his statements.

The temptation to fiction on the part of the apostle was of the strongest sort. All additional lustre thrown upon the person of Jesus was reflected upon him, the beloved disciple, a chief apostle, and leader in the church. The purest sentiments arising from friendship and reverence for his master, would also prompt to seize all opportunities of doing him honour ; and who can assure us that the apostle did not partake so far of the imperfections of human nature as, in some instances, to overlook the character of the means for the attainment of a good end ? Historical veracity would not appear to him of the chief importance. "He only is a liar who denieth Jesus to be the Christ," 1 Epist. ii. 22. He does not even state that his gospel was written in order to give a correct history of Jesus, but he says, "These are written that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing ye might have life through his name," xx. 31.

There is an important consideration which establishes some difference between the fictions of this writer and ordinary cases of false testimony. It is, that he supposed himself to be writing under the influence of the Holy Spirit. xiv. 16—18, "And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide

Cana ;—the voice from heaven in the presence of the multitude at the temple ;—the raising of Lazarus in public near Jerusalem. Matthew had made the raising of Jairus's daughter to be done in secret ; and Nain was a comparatively obscure place.

* The conversion of water into wine at
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with you for ever; even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him, for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you." 26, "But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you." xv. 26, 27, "But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me. And ye also shall bear witness, because ye have been with me from the beginning." He believed, therefore, that the Holy Spirit, which was given after Jesus was glorified and become invisible (vii. 39), was his representative and the organ of communication with his disciples; consequently that whatever was suggested by the Holy Spirit might be regarded as Jesus's own words. On this principle he would even consider the dictates of the Holy Spirit since the death of Jesus as of equal authority with the words spoken by Jesus when he was with them, or in the beginning. And if we allow that this writer, like many others, was liable to consider the offspring of his own imagination as the dictates of the Holy Spirit, it was natural that he should attribute to Jesus his own views and opinions without any consciousness of fraud; for the distinction of the time at which the sentiment was first uttered would appear comparatively unimportant. The most dispassionate historians are apt to introduce their own views into the discourses they record; much more would this be the case with a zealous defender of a church interested in the controversies of his time, and believing himself under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

The following texts indicate that his statements were not implicitly received by all in his own time. iii. 11, "We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen, and ye receive not our witness," 32, "What he hath seen and heard, that he testifieth, and no man receiveth his testimony." Also the strong asseveration of his veracity, even

when relating a fact perfectly credible, viz., the issuing of blood and water from the wound in the side of Jesus (xix. 35), affords presumption that his assertions frequently met with considerable opposition. See also I Epist. iv. 6, "We are of God: he that knoweth God, heareth us; he that is not of God, heareth not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth and the spirit of error."

The doctrine adopted towards the close of the first century, that Christ was the divine logos of the Platonists, gives a peculiar character to the descriptions of Jesus in this Gospel. The title, Son of God, is given more frequently, as well as intimations of his possessing a super-human character. He exhibits fewer traces of actions and thoughts common to men, but moves and speaks like a sublime and mystical personage not belonging to this world. The difference between this and the first three Gospels is, indeed, so marked in this respect, that the Fathers considered the former as treating of the humanity, and the latter of the divinity, of Christ.

Our object now being merely to form an opinion as to the historical credibility of the Evangelists, it is unnecessary to dwell upon those beauties in their works which are generally acknowledged. It has been observed, that the circumstances attending the breaking-up of the Jewish state, and the supposed advent of the Messiah, would account, in a great measure, for the exaltation of thought and feeling observable in the first three Gospels. That of John was written much later; and we find in most parts a want of the concise energy of his predecessors and an occasional tendency to feebleness and prolixity. But, on the other hand, a tone of affection and pathos has often been noticed in this Gospel, which agrees well with the character attributed to the author, of the beloved disciple; and which, although it may not prove that he was incapable of indulging at times in garbure and romance, yet tells that he was not a common interested deceiver, misleading men for profit or from ambition alone, but that he was enthusiastically attached to the memory of his Master, and a sincere believer in the divinity of his cause.

ARTICLE VI.—ON THE RESURRECTION AND ASCENSION OF CHRIST.

I. PETER and the other Apostles were dismayed for a time by the death of Jesus; but having become persuaded that he was the Messiah, and having abandoned all for his cause, they comforted themselves with the belief that he was taken up into heaven like Moses and Elias, and would soon appear again to fulfil his promises and restore the throne of Israel. They determined then to maintain their society; and having assembled in an upper chamber those of the disciples who had not yet dispersed themselves, they agreed to preach that their Master was risen from the dead, "Wherefore of these men which have companied with us, all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, beginning from the baptism of John, unto that same day that he was taken up from us, must one be ordained to be a witness with us of his resurrection." Acts i. 21, 22.

The resurrection of the dead was a stirring question at that time, and was part of the creeds of both the Pharisees and Essenes. The doctrine, therefore, that Jesus had risen from the dead, in a spiritual sense at least, would easily be admitted by the mass of the people, and, indeed, cannot be disputed by persons of any age believing in the immortality of the soul.

It seems probable that the original belief amongst the Apostles was merely that Christ had been raised from the dead in an invisible or spiritual manner; for where we can arrive at Peter's own words, viz., in his Epistle, he speaks of Christ as being "put to death in the flesh," but made alive in the spirit. 1 Peter iii. 18, *θανάτωθεὶς μὲν σαρκί, ζωοποιηθεὶς δὲ τῷ πνεύματι*. That the last phrase signifies a mode of operation invisible to human eyes appears from the following clause, which describes Jesus as preaching, also in the spirit, *ἐν ᾧ* to the spirits in prison.

But some of the disciples soon added to this idea of an invisible or spiritual resurrection, that Jesus had appeared to many in a bodily form. In the book of Acts, the Apostles are frequently made to profess themselves "witnesses, μαρτυρῶντες, of the resurrection of Jesus." But as the word does not signify, of necessity, an eye-witness, but rather an

assertor or testifier, this declaration of the Apostles may mean only that they believed, and were ready to assert, that he was risen. That they had actually seen him alive since his supposed resurrection, is quite a distinct assertion, and not included in the former. And it is this latter point which it chiefly concerns us to examine. First, let us collect all the testimonies concerning the resurrection found in the Acts, which, it must be remembered, is not from the pen of an Apostle, but of Luke, who does not tell us that he was present at the earlier transactions which he relates.

Acts i. 22, *Of these men must one be ordained to be a witness with us of his resurrection.*

Acts ii. 24, *Whom God hath raised up.* 32, *This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses.*

Acts iii. 15, *And killed the Prince of Life, whom God hath raised up whereof we are witnesses.*

Acts iv. 1, 2, *The Sadducees came upon them, being grieved that they taught through Jesus the resurrection of the dead.*

10, *Whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead.*

20, *For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard.*

33, *And with great power gave the Apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus.*

Acts v. 17, *Then the high priest rose up, and all they that were with him (which is the sect of the Sadducees), and were filled with indignation.*

Acts v. 30, *The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom ye slew and hanged on a tree.*

Acts x. 40, 41, *Him God raised up the third day, and shewed him openly. Not to all the people, but unto witnesses chosen before of God, even to us, who did eat and drink with him after he was risen from the dead.—Peter's speech.*

Acts xiii. 30—37, *But God raised him from the dead. And he was seen many days of them which came up with him from Galilee to Jerusalem, who are his witnesses unto the people For David was laid unto his fathers, and saw corruption: but he,*

whom God raised again, saw no corruption.—*Paul's speech at Antioch in Pisidia.*

Acts xvii. 18, He seemeth to be a settler forth of strange Gods, because he preached to them Jesus and the resurrection.

Acts xvii. 31, Whereof he hath given assurance to all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead.

Acts xxiii. 6, I am a Pharisee, the son of a Pharisee; of the hope and resurrection of the dead am I called in question.

Acts xxiv. 21, Touching the resurrection of the dead I am called in question by you this day.

Acts xxv. 19, They had certain questions against him of their own superstition, and of one Jesus, which was dead, whom Paul affirmed to be alive.

Acts xxvi. 8, Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you that God should raise the dead? 22, 23, I continue unto this day, witnessing—that Christ should suffer, and that he should be the first that should rise from the dead.

In only one of these speeches is Peter made to say that the witnesses had seen Jesus. (x. 40, 41.) And here we have little reason to think that we have Peter's exact words. For, at the distance of about forty years at which Luke wrote, he could only have a general impression of the purport of the Apostles' early discourses; and since by that time the stories of the re-appearance of Jesus had grown into general repute, and were believed by Luke himself, it was natural for him to mingle his own and the popular belief in his report. All that the Apostles had said concerning the resurrection, although applicable at first only to an invisible and supposed resurrection, would, in consequence of the prevalence of the stories alluded to, come to be understood as attesting a bodily re-appearance. The distinction between the two kinds of assertion might easily be overlooked, and the one, when reported at second-hand and from hearsay, be changed into the other. It has been seen in the case of Gamaliel, that Luke allowed himself to fill up what he considered suitable speeches for his personages; we are therefore on surer ground when quoting the Apostle's own writings.

In Peter's first Epistle, all the testimonies are these—

i. 3, Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which, according to his abundant mercy, hath begotten us again unto a lively hope, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, unto an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away. 20, 21, Who (Christ) was pre-ordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifested in these last times for you, who by him do believe in God that raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory, that your faith and hope might be in God.

iii. 18, Being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by (in?) the spirit.

This is the language of a man who sincerely believed that Christ had been raised from the dead. But the testimony to his having appeared again in a bodily form is wanting. Peter does not say or imply that he had seen Jesus alive again; and at verses 7 and 13, ch. i., he speaks of his appearing as an event still to come. "That the trial of your faith might be found unto praise, and honour, and glory, at the appearing of Jesus Christ." "Hope to the end, for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ."

The Epistle of James does not mention the resurrection of Jesus.

Neither do the Epistles of John, nor that of Jude, allude to it.

The reasons for concluding that Matthew the Apostle did not write the Gospel under his name have been stated.

John remains the only one of the twelve Apostles who can be said to have asserted that he had seen Jesus alive after his death; and the reasons for supposing this Apostle capable of fiction have been considered.

The argument, therefore, that a disbelief of the resurrection of Christ renders it necessary to attribute wilful falsehood to the twelve Apostles rests on an over-statement. This charge need only apply to John. The extent of deception proveable upon Peter only amounts to this,—that he allowed stories which he knew to be false to become current, without leaving on record his contradiction of them. But it will be seen shortly that there is reason to

believe that Peter did not himself confirm these stories. With respect to the other Apostles, Andrew, Philip, Bartholomew, Thomas, the two Jameses, Matthew, Simon Zelotes, Jude, and Matthias, it is seen that we have little or no testimony from them upon the point in question. It seems probable that they, as well as Peter and John, at first treated the stories of Jesus's appearance as idle tales, but in the end allowed them to pass current without protest. In the perplexity occasioned by the removal of the body of Jesus in a manner unknown to them, they might easily be led to believe some of these tales; and for such of them as they could not but know to be false, the honour of the church might be in later times a sufficient motive for silence at least.

It may be asked, if Jesus had not really appeared to them, what was their motive for preaching so earnestly the novel doctrine of his resurrection? Why should they make this the most prominent topic in almost every speech and writing? The answer is, that, without this doctrine, their cause must be given up. A crucified malefactor was not the Messiah of the prophets; and if all they could say for Jesus ended in this, their claim for him would seem to bear absurdity on the face of it. But that he had risen, ascended into heaven, and was soon to come again, opened a very different view of the matter; he might then still be the Messiah, and his crucifixion, which for a moment had appeared even to themselves an end of their hopes, became a very trifling objection. Their unwillingness to renounce a cause to which they were so strongly engaged, might of itself have begun to suggest the idea of a resurrection; but whether this were so or not, the disappearance of the body of which they had ocular demonstration, followed by reports of his having appeared which came to their ears, might easily seem to men in their circumstances evidence so strong as to lead them to class the resurrection of Jesus amongst the things which they had seen and heard. Thus their master was proved to them to be the Messiah by the resurrection from the dead, and thus they must prove him so to others.

II. Paul only joined the church some

time after the death of Jesus, and could therefore only say what he had been told concerning his resurrection; but as he was the founder of Gentile Christianity, the nature of his testimony forms an important feature in the inquiry.

The grounds on which he embraced the cause of the church were, according to his own statement, the direction of the Holy Spirit, and his belief that the Messiahship of Jesus fulfilled the Prophets. "Wherefore I give you to understand, that no man speaking by the Spirit of God calleth Jesus accursed: and that no man can say that Jesus is the Lord but by the Holy Ghost." 1 Cor. xii. 3.* "Whereof (the church) I am made a minister according to the dispensation of God, which is given to me for you, to fulfil the word of God; even the mystery which hath been hid from ages, and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints: to whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory." Col. i. 25—27.†

But, besides the motives which men acknowledge to themselves, they are often unconsciously actuated by others arising from their position and character. And in the case of Paul, it seems reasonable to conjecture, that an active and enterprising spirit, which rendered the task of proselytism and the administration of church affairs in reality, a pleasure rather than a burden; an enlarged understanding, which perceived and overleaped the narrow boundaries of the Mosaic or orthodox Judaism; a turn for ingenious disputation, which made the search for new meanings of the Scriptures a congenial employment; a vivid imagination, which was gratified by the romance of the Messiah's advent; and the Pharasaic belief of the resurrection of the dead; that all this unknown to himself, or included by him in the operation of the Spirit, assisted Paul's conversion to the rising branch of the Essene sect.

He nowhere states, however, that his conversion was owing to the strong

* See also Eph. i. 17; Gal. i. 16; ii. 2; 2 Cor. i. 21, 22; 1 Cor. ii. 10—15.

† See also Rom. i. 2; xvi. 26.

evidence which the followers of Jesus were able to bring of their Master's miracles and appearance since his death; for he says, that James, Peter, and John, who were the very persons to give such information, added nothing to him. Gal. ii. 6, 9. There are no indications in his Epistles that he investigated the evidence of the alleged facts in a calm and judicial manner, and that he made this investigation the foundation of his new faith. In this case the company of the eye-witnesses would have been most interesting to him; he would have diligently collected particulars from them, compared their different accounts, and eagerly sought any one who could bring to light additional circumstances. But he says, after speaking of his persecuting, "But when it pleased God to reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen, immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood: neither went I up to Jerusalem, to them which were apostles before me; but I went unto Arabia, and returned again unto Damascus. Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and abode with him fifteen days. But other of the Apostles saw I none, save James the Lord's brother. Now the things which I write unto you, behold, before God, I lie not. Afterwards I came unto the regions of Syria and Cilicia, and was unknown by face unto the churches of Judea, which were in Christ: but they heard only that he which persecuted us in times past, now preacheth the faith which once he destroyed. And they glorified God in me. Then, fourteen years after, I went up again to Jerusalem, with Barnabas, and took Titus with me also. *And I went up by revelation, and communicated unto them that Gospel which I preach among the Gentiles. . . .* But of those who seemed to be somewhat, (from verse 9, evidently James, Peter, and John,) they added nothing to me." Gal. i. ii.

Thus the convert of the greatest talents and learning in the apostolic times, who had all facilities of access to the Apostles, not only did not attribute his conversion to their testimony, but boasts that he hardly came into their company during the process. With what eagerness would a modern inquirer seek Peter, and James the Lord's

brother! But Paul, three years after he had begun to entertain the subject, cared so little for the information which they were able to give, that he merely saw James, did not visit most of the Apostles, and as if to shew that the fifteen days which he spent with Peter could not possibly have added much to him, he points out the differences which he had with that Apostle, and frequently intimates that he himself ought not to be considered behind the chiefest of the Apostles.

Paul's mode of thinking seems to resemble exactly that of many Christians of later times. If the resurrection of the dead be denied, the first thought is, that this contradicts an essential doctrine of Christianity; "our faith then is vain; the apostles preached that Christ was raised, and so we have believed." They believe, no doubt sincerely, on this ground; but, like Paul, not having thought it necessary to examine closely the evidence of the fact, they turn instinctively to other arguments. So Paul falls into an argument of natural reason common to all ages, in support of a resurrection, viz., the sufferings of good men, which he urges in a forcible and affecting manner, "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable."

As Paul himself did not believe the doctrine of Christ's resurrection from an investigation of the Apostles' testimony, so neither did he require his hearers to believe it on this ground. They were to receive it as a matter of faith. As Abraham believed a thing improbable in itself, because it was necessary to fulfil the promises of God, so was the church required to believe the resurrection of Christ, because, in Paul's scheme, it fulfilled the Prophets. And this faith was to proceed from hearing himself, to whom the doctrine had been revealed, and also from the operation of the Spirit upon themselves. See Rom. iv. 20—24; x. 8—17; 1 Cor. ii. 5, 10—15; 2 Cor. v. 5; Eph. ii. 8.

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A REFUTATION OF THE SUPERNATURAL ORIGIN OF CHRISTIANITY.

ARTICLE VI.—ON THE RESURRECTION AND ASCENSION OF CHRIST.* (concluded).

The modern Christian, who has been accustomed to believe the resurrection of Christ on the supposed strength of its evidence, is astonished to find throughout Paul's writings no passage recommending this as a basis for faith: on the contrary, the repeated exhortations to avoid the words of fleshly wisdom, and to seek the influences of the Spirit, seem to discourage such a mode of conversion.

On the whole, Paul's testimony to the resurrection of Christ is of little weight, because he appears to have paid no attention to the question of the evidence, but to have believed on grounds which are not approved by the modern rational inquirer.

III. The undisputed apostolic writings affording thus very little evidence as to the point in question, we are left to depend for particulars concerning the appearances of Jesus on writings of a later date and less certain authenticity, viz., the four Gospels, and some fragments of writings of less repute. Thus, if we except the Gospel of John, we have not, on this momentous point, the evidence of eye-witnesses, but merely second-hand and hearsay information.

There are obviously many contradictions in the different accounts of the Evangelists; but the principal ones agree very nearly in this—that Mary Magdalene and other women went early to the sepulchre, and found that the body was gone; upon which they returned to tell Peter and the other disciples; that Peter and others went to the tomb and found that it was so; after which there arose reports of

Jesus having been seen in different places.

Three relate the circumstance that some person or persons in or at the tomb told Mary Magdalene that Jesus was risen and gone into Galilee. This affords a suspicion that the affair was contrived by Joseph to relieve himself from the disciples. The report which arose amongst the Jews that the body had been stolen away, is confirmed by the admission on all sides that it was not to be found; but by whom it was stolen is not so clear. The question seems to lie between Joseph and the disciples. The subsequent conduct of the disciples, their boldness and apparent sincerity in asserting publicly the resurrection and the speedy re-appearance of Jesus, together with the style of earnestness in their writings, (of which the first epistle of Peter is a striking instance,) render it difficult to believe that they were guilty of such a gross deception. In this affair they have more the air of men imposed upon than of impostors. To exaggerate and somewhat embellish facts, in subsequent narrations, has been done sometimes by men on the whole well-meaning and honest; but to contrive the removal and secret disposal of the body with a view to publishing its resurrection, betokens a greater degree of fraud than appears to agree with the Apostles' characters. There are no indications of such a proceeding on their part in

* These articles are abridged from "Hennel's Inquiry concerning the Origin of Christianity." The work to which reference has previously been made.

any of the narratives; for all agree that the news of the disappearance of the body was unexpected and surprising. Nor would it have been easy for them to effect such a purpose, since the garden was not theirs, nor the tomb in their keeping.

On the other hand, the silence of Joseph, when his testimony might have been so useful one way or the other, and his retiring suddenly from a business in which he had begun to be conspicuous, indicate an anxiety to avoid meeting questions. There were many motives for the contrivance on his part; and he was well able to execute it, for he was an influential man, and the body lay in his own tomb and garden. Moreover, he had probably the co-operation of Nicodemus, who was in nearly the same position. Matthew's story of the guard bears these marks of fiction: Firstly, The Pharisees are made to say, "We remember that that deceiver said, while he was yet alive, After three days I will rise again." From John xx. 9, it appears that Jesus had never said this, even to his own disciples (see chap. xv.) Secondly, The anticipation of the Pharisees that the last error, i. e., the belief in the resurrection of Jesus, would be worse than the first, or the belief in his Messiahship, was too far-fetched for men in their circumstances. They were more likely to rest contented with having got rid of a supposed mover of sedition, than to act further upon what must then have appeared a very doubtful conjecture. If the idea had occurred to any of them, that the disciples would endeavour to spread the belief of their master's resurrection, they could hardly be so acute as to foresee that this would in time grow into a doctrine more important than that of his Messiahship. Thirdly, The representation of the Pharisees being admitted to be fictitious, the obtaining of the guard, which is said to have arisen from it, must be considered fictitious also. Fourthly, No other ground can be assigned for setting a guard, for Pilate was so careless concerning the body as to grant it readily on Joseph's application. Fifthly, The writer of this Gospel endeavours to enhance the interest of the crucifixion by inserting many marvels resting on his own authority alone, such

as the dream of Pilate's wife, two earthquakes, the rising of the saints, &c. Sixthly, He had an additional motive for inventing this story, viz., to answer an objection of opponents in his own time. Seventhly, This story is not alluded to by the other three evangelists, nor any where else in the New Testament; although it would have formed a very important feature in all the accounts of the resurrection.

History loses sight of Joseph and Nicodemus exactly at the time when they ceased to have any open intercourse with the disciples, viz., when they had embalmed the body of Jesus, and allowed the women to see where it was laid. Thus they were the parties whom we last saw in charge of the body; and it is for them to give an account of it. But as, from that moment, they have shrunk from public notice, conjecture alone is able to follow up their examination, and to gain an insight into their counsels and doings on the evening of the day of the crucifixion, and the sabbath which followed it. On the close of that eventful day they could not have been undisturbed or inactive, for a more perilous situation than theirs could hardly be conceived. They had been in secret communication with the Galilean who had just been executed for the treason of aiming at the throne of the Jews; and the examination of his followers, or even an indiscreet word from them, might proclaim to the governor, or their brethren of the Sanhedrim, that they too were his disciples. The fishermen of Galilee might be allowed to escape unnoticed; but a counsellor and a ruler could not be neglected, if the charge of treason were once directed against them. One of those tumults to which the Jewish populace were so prone might be excited by the friends of Jesus: this would stimulate the governor to a more rigid investigation of the affair, and to more sweeping executions. Or, supposing even that no such attempt were made, the continual resort of the disciples to the tomb in his garden must draw attention to Joseph, and strengthen suspicion against him. The disciples must be dismissed; but in what manner? To forbid them access to the garden, or to renounce them harshly, might provoke the

disclosures which he was anxious to avoid.

The accounts referred to supply the rest. The women came to the tomb early, and found that the body was gone. On a subsequent visit they found a young man there, who, if he were not an angel, must have been some one employed by Joseph, for who can suppose that he would have allowed an unauthorised person to be in such an important charge at such a critical time? This person told the women that Jesus was risen and gone into Galilee, whither his disciples were to follow him.

Thus, if the accounts be disentangled from those contradictory miraculous additions which have every appearance of being the fictions of later times, the facts which remain, and a natural conjecture which links them together, offer an easy solution of the mystery.

The question concerning the disposal of the body of Jesus does not appear to have excited much attention at the time; for we nowhere learn that any search was instituted for it by the Jewish rulers; which certainly they would have done if they had thought it worth while; for it cannot be supposed that *they* believed that Jesus was actually risen on the mere report of some of the disciples. But there was, in fact, no reason for such a search; they were satisfied with having put Jesus out of their way, since he appeared to be a political as well as a religious innovator; and then they had more pressing matters to think of. The disciples did not appear to be men of dangerous characters; and being deprived of their chief, might very well be left to think and say what they pleased concerning his body. A belief in its resurrection might very well be allowed them, provided they abstained from efforts to avenge him. Whereas the exhibition of the dead body would have exasperated them, and, perhaps, the multitudes with whom Jesus had been popular. The best policy was to let the affair die away. The formation of a new religious society by the few followers of Jesus, was not important enough to occupy much of their attention, particularly as, at first, they did not seem to differ much from the other Essenes; and when, after thirty years,

they had become numerous enough to make it worth while to disprove their assertion of the resurrection, it was not easy for any one to find the body, unless he had the assistance of Joseph or Nicodemus, which they were not likely to afford. The opponents of the Christians were therefore obliged to say, that the disciples had stolen away the body.

IV. Let us return to consider the disciples' own accounts, or rather those which have come to us as the disciples' accounts; from Paul, Mark, Luke, from a writer said by Papias to be Matthew, and from the Ephesian church professing to give the words of John. These state that the body of Jesus became alive again. At least, *one* well-substantiated account of its actual appearance is necessary to establish such an important point.

Mark, it is said, obtained information from Peter; and therefore it is in Mark chiefly that we should look to find the important testimony of the chief apostle. Now, it is plain that the last twelve verses of Mark have been added to what was written at first, either by a different hand, or by the same hand at a different time; and the original narrative, which has been replaced or continued by another at the ninth verse, *mentions no appearance of Jesus, nor anything in itself miraculous*, after the burial of Jesus.

The first who is said to have seen Jesus is Mary Magdalene. But from the original part of Mark, and from Luke, it does not appear that she said so herself. Her first report was only, according to John, that the body was taken away; according to Luke, that she had seen some persons at the tomb who told her he was risen. Matthew says for her, that Jesus met her and the other Mary on their first return from the tomb, and told them that he would meet the disciples in Galilee; the very message, which, according to Luke, she said had been given by the angel or angels at the tomb. This implies clearly an error in Matthew; for who can believe that she would have contented herself with delivering this message of the angel if she had already, as Matthew says, seen Jesus himself? Moreover, Luke confirms his statement at ver. 23, that the women said only

that they had seen a vision of angels, and not Jesus himself. This is enough to convict Matthew of incorrectness; and he, not Mary Magdalene, is responsible for this story of Jesus's first appearance.

John however says, that Mary came again to the sepulchre, saw the two angels there, and then turning round saw some one whom she believed at first to be the gardener, but afterwards Jesus himself. The particulars of this appearance differ much from that in Matthew; and there is again strong reason for doubting whether she gave the account herself: for the seeing of the two angels identifies this visit with the one related by Luke, according to whom, on returning from this visit, she *did not say* that she had seen Jesus. So that if we prefer the original part of Mark, and Luke, to Matthew, John, and the supplement to Mark, there is no evidence that Mary herself said that she had seen Jesus.

But supposing that Matthew and John have each only mistaken the occasion, and that, at one time or other, she *did say* this,—how far is she to be believed? The disciples considered her words idle tales, and believed them not. Luke xxiv. 11; Mark xvi. 11. We have thus their example for considering her testimony alone as insufficient, and for seeking further evidence.

Luke says, that he appeared the same day to Cleopas and another disciple, whose eyes at first were holden that they did not know him. This is repeated in the supplement to Mark, which says that he appeared *in another form* to two of the disciples as they went into the country; but it is added, that the other disciples did not believe them. According to Luke, so far from objecting to the account as incredible, the other disciples gave a similar one themselves. The doctrine sought to be conveyed by the story appears to be, that Christ suffered in order to fulfil the prophecies; and as this doctrine became a favourite one in the church, Luke judged the story a proper one to be inserted in his collection. Although this view of Christ's death is frequently dwelt upon in the Acts and Epistles, the story of the two disciples is never alluded to. Yet if Christ had appeared to expound the prophecies concerning

himself, one would not have expected to find his exposition quite forgotten in the church, but rather that it would have been preserved as a precious text book. But it can be shewn that there are no prophecies which can reasonably be interpreted concerning the sufferings of Jesus; and in this case the story becomes evidently fabulous.

The phrase in Mark "he appeared in another form," shows that the idea prevailed that Jesus assumed different forms after his resurrection. Consequently any stranger whom the disciples remembered to have seen about that time might be supposed to be Jesus; and thus a foundation might be laid for many stories like those of Cleopas and Mary Magdalene.

Luke says, that the same day the eleven told Cleopas and his companion that "the Lord had appeared to Simon," which had before been said by Paul: "He was seen of Cephas." The same story probably gave rise to both assertions; for both Luke and Paul could only state what they had heard from others. We have nowhere any particulars of this appearance to Simon Peter; nor can we discover that he himself ever said that he had seen Jesus. When he went to examine the tomb, after receiving the report of Magdalene, he only found that the body was gone, and went away wondering. Luke xxiv. 12; John xx. 6.

The same day, at evening, according to John and Luke, Jesus appeared to all the apostles at Jerusalem, Luke xxiv. 33, John xx. 19, which does not disagree with Mark and Paul, but contradicts Matthew, who makes the eleven depart into Galilee to see him.

The story, in Luke, of Jesus's eating the fish, and showing his hands and feet, seems to have been invented to controvert the early and original doctrine, that he was risen only in a spiritual or invisible manner. According to Jerome, there was a similar story in the Gospel according to the Hebrews. Whether the author of this gospel copied from Luke, or Luke from him, is not clear; but a shade of probability in favour of the latter supposition arises from this, that Ignatius says, *Smyrn.* i. 9, "But I know that even after his resurrection he was in the flesh; and I believe that he is still

so. And when he came to those who were with Peter, he said unto them, Take, handle me, and see that I am not an incorporeal dæmon. And straightway they felt him, and believed; being convinced both by his flesh and spirit. For this cause they despised death, and were found to be above it. But after his resurrection he did eat and drink with them, as he was flesh; although as to his spirit, he was united to the Father." Which story of Ignatius agrees very well with that in Luke; but Jerome says that Ignatius took it from the Gospel according to the Hebrews; which indicates that in Jerome's time that gospel was considered as its proper and original source.

John alone relates that, eight days afterwards, Jesus appeared again to the disciples at Jerusalem, and held the discourse with Thomas, who calls him, "My Lord and my God." This latter title betrays the fiction; since the term God was not applied to Jesus until the doctrine of the incarnation of the logos had been established, or near the end of the first century.*

Matthew alone relates that Jesus appeared to the eleven on a mountain in Galilee; but that some doubted. If some of those who were actually at the mountain doubted whether they saw Jesus or not, we may reasonably doubt whether he was to be seen at all there; especially as the words attributed to him do not seem at all likely to have been said, from the disciples paying no attention to them. For, in the Acts and Epistles, they never baptise in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. If Paul knew of this story, and believed it, he would hardly have spoken so slightly of baptism: "I thank God that I baptized none of you but Crispus and Gaius." It seems not unlikely that some of the

disciples returned to Galilee, expecting to see Jesus there; that subsequently some of them, to gain themselves and the church credit, asserted that they had seen him there, which the others denied; that, consequently, the story was looked upon as so doubtful in the church, that Mark, although he relates the command to go into Galilee, judged it better to suppress it.

John, (or the person calling himself "we," who writes for him,) says that Jesus shewed himself again to the disciples at the sea of Tiberias, and gives an account of a miraculous draft of fishes much like that described by Luke at the first calling of Peter at the same sea; of Jesus eating broiled fish, which resembles Luke's account of the same thing at Jerusalem; and of prophecies concerning the death of Peter and the long life of John, which are not alluded to in the Acts or any of the Epistles, except the second, or spurious, Epistle of Peter. If things so interesting to Peter had really taken place, it is singular not only that Mark, the follower of Peter, should omit them, but that the person completing his Gospel should give an account which does not admit of their being true; for he represents the ascension as happening immediately after Jesus had spoken to the disciples at Jerusalem. But the resemblances noticed authorise the conjecture that the whole chapter is grounded upon the above stories of Luke, with such improvements as had grown up by the year 97.

Paul says, that after Jesus had been seen by Peter and the twelve, (query, eleven? for Matthias was not yet chosen,) he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once; but he does not say clearly when; and it is impossible to discover when it could be; for John alone mentions a second appearance to the general body of the disciples, viz., when Thomas was with them. The meeting in a place with closed doors, and the promise of the power to remit sins, given to the same company, imply that the writer did not intend to speak of so numerous an assembly as five hundred. But twenty or thirty years afterwards some might be ready to say, that five hundred had seen him. The speeches in the Acts only assert that Jesus was shewn to "chosen witnesses"

* The reader is referred to the works of the Unitarians for proof that the application of the term "God" to Christ, in the writings of Paul, is doubtful, or that the text has been corrupted. But the genuineness of the text in John has never been questioned; and the fathers generally maintained that he taught the divinity of Christ. See *Priestley's Early Opin.* ch. vii. Christ is called God frequently in the epistles of Ignatius, A.D. 107. *Smyrnaeans* i. 2; iii. 11; *Romans* i. 1, 13; ii. 16; *Eph.* i. 1; ii. 7.

(x. 41, xiii. 30), which surely could not mean so many as five hundred. This story is important, because it assists us to estimate the weight due to Paul's testimony. Now, since it is impossible to believe that so important an appearance could have been omitted by all those who wrote professedly on the subject, if they believed it, it follows that Paul adopted the story which they disbelieved or neglected, and consequently that he was far from rigid in investigating the accounts of the re-appearances of Jesus. This is confirmed by Paul's citing an appearance to James, which none of the Evangelists have noticed, but which is found in a fragment of the Gospel according to the Hebrews.

In the Acts, Luke says Jesus was seen by the disciples, and spoke to them during forty days; which agrees very ill with all the preceding stories, in which Jesus is represented as appearing and vanishing suddenly, in different forms, different parts of the country, and only at intervals.

V. It was undoubtedly very easy to invent stories like these during the sixty years between the death of Jesus and the writing of the last Gospel; and there can be as little doubt that the disposition of the Church in general was such as to encourage the invention.

Peter and the other Apostles believed their master to be the Messiah, and that he would become miraculously king of Israel: they were disappointed and perplexed by his death; but, still believing in his divine mission, and finding his body gone, they received readily the idea that he was risen, and would soon re-appear to fulfil his promises.* Such a belief was not unnatural to men in their circumstances, whose religion contained histories of several persons taken from the earth miraculously, and who fancied that they perceived a correspondence between their master's life and sufferings and the prophecies. Once thoroughly possessed with the belief that Jesus was the

Messiah, the king of Israel, they could find no solution of the mystery of his death but in the idea that he was soon to return to claim his kingdom: "Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?" Consequently the reports which soon arose amongst the more ignorant and eager of their followers, that Jesus had been actually seen in different places, were not only a pleasing relief to their distress for his sudden loss, but agreed with the view which now seemed to disclose itself, of the divine plans concerning him. They knew not but that some of these stories might be true. Most men are not very rigid in their examination of a belief which agrees well with their interests and feelings. The apostles did not at first believe them which said they had seen Jesus; but the influence of these tales, so pleasing to their own minds, and so powerful in promoting the faith of the church, afterwards led them, perhaps sincerely, to blame their own incredulity as hardness of heart.

Nevertheless it may be said, that the tales of the re-appearance of Jesus, if really false, could not have obtained a general reception without considerable opposition; and that traces of this opposition would be found. They are found in the tone adopted towards the unbelievers; for this shows that the objections of such were neither unfrequent nor unimportant: "He upbraided them with their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they believed not them which had seen him after he was risen." Mark xvi. 14. "Because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed; blessed are they that have not seen me, and yet have believed." John xx. 29. "But some doubted." Matt. xxviii. 17. "He that believeth not, shall be damned." Mark xvi. 16. The ascription of such sayings as these to Jesus, shews that the difficulty of overcoming the disbelief of many in the church was by no means insignificant. Thus at the very time, the very hour when Jesus was said to have appeared again, scepticism seems to have been as prevalent as it is at the present day, and among the first disciples themselves. While the harshness of tone observable the writers of the early church on this point, joined to the confused manner

* John believed that he was risen instantly on finding the tomb empty. "Then went in also that other disciple which came first to the sepulchre, and he saw and believed." John xx. 8. Peter was more slow. Luke xxiv. 12.

in which they give their own accounts of the resurrection, leads us to think that they found difficulty in overcoming the scepticism by an appeal to the testimony then existing.

VI. Upon the whole, the accounts of the appearances of Jesus after his death are incredible; because

Firstly, Not one of them comes down to us attested in such a manner as would be commonly thought sufficient to establish a fact of importance. With the exception of John, (for a faithful report of whose testimony we depend on the integrity of the Ephesian church,) not one of the supposed eye-witnesses gives direct evidence. Matthew says that Mary Magdalene saw Jesus; Paul says the same for Peter; Luke says that he appeared to Cleopas; the author of the Gospel according to the Hebrews speaks for James; and in each case the probability is that the account had passed through many intermediate narrators. The accounts individually are insufficient evidence; nor can they together make up a cumulative proof, because they proceed from witnesses only nominally independent, but in reality influenced by the same views and feelings.

Secondly, These accounts present irreconcilable contradictions.

Thirdly, They resemble very much other tales of apparitions in the sudden coming and vanishing of Jesus.

Fourthly, It has been very common in the Jewish and Christian, as well as other churches, for those who wished to enforce a particular precept or doctrine to say that some eminent prophet, angel, or saint, had appeared to reveal it to them. Jesus appears to the two disciples, to tell them that he suffered in fulfilment of the prophecies; to the eleven in Galilee, in order to give them the baptismal commission to all nations; to the disciples at Jerusalem, to give them the power of remitting or retaining sins; and to Thomas, to proclaim the necessity of believing in his resurrection without having seen him.

Fifthly, There were many who disbelieved these accounts in the earliest times.

Sixthly, Most of the attestations of the resurrection of Jesus in the apostolic writings do not of necessity apply to these accounts of his appearance, but to

the general doctrine that he was risen, which might be in an invisible or spiritual manner. And those which bear a further sense seem to allude to stories of visions.

VII. The ascension of Jesus into heaven is related only by Luke, and by the author of the last twelve verses of Mark.* It is alluded to John xx. 17, but no account is given of it. That in the appendix to Mark is given in a careless manner in one verse, and places the transaction immediately after the first appearance to the eleven at Jerusalem. Luke in the Gospel seems to agree with this as to the time; but in the Acts, where he is more circumstantial, he says it took place forty days afterwards. A more striking event could hardly be imagined than the ascent of Jesus in the presence of his disciples; yet one of the Evangelists says not a word concerning it; another, supposed to have been one of the witnesses, stops short when he approaches it; and only those two of the four, who are allowed not to have been eye-witnesses (and only one of these, if Mark did not write the last twelve verses) give any account of it. The belief that Jesus must have ascended into heaven like Enoch and Elijah was likely to give rise to some dramatic descriptions of the event, as of a real scene; and one highly-coloured representation has been preserved or drawn by Luke.

The ancient Jewish prophets, like many eastern writers, were accustomed to mix facts, visions, and allegories, in the same narrative, without marking clearly where one sort of writing ends and another begins; and this vivid manner of writing was imitated by their readers and admirers, the early Christians. Looking at the matter in this way, the stories of the temptation, the preaching to the spirits in prison, the appearances of Jesus after his death, and the ascension, are pleasing romances. But in considering them as matters of fact, we become as much embarrassed as if we were to endeavour to explain

* It is remarkable that, if these twelve verses be omitted, as Jerome and Gregory Nyssen say was generally done in the early copies, Mark, the follower of Peter, relates neither the miraculous birth, the resurrection, nor the ascension of Christ.

in the same way the books of Ezekiel, Daniel, and the Revelations.

The most beautiful fictions are those which bring to view the forms of departed friends; for in these the colours of the imagination are both deepened and softened by the more refined feelings, friendship, esteem, and sorrow. The sudden loss of such a leader as Jesus must have left a strong impression on any minds; much more on those of fishermen and peasants of an eastern country, who believed him to be the Messiah. The romantic hopes which he had excited, the sublime views to which he had raised their minds, and the feelings of veneration and attachment to himself which he had awakened, could not at once subside. All these powerful sources of action found a vent in the continuance of his plans, in the institution of memorials of him, in heightening and colouring to other hearers the incidents of his life, and in cultivating the delightful illusions of his resurrection, perpetual presence, and future re-appearance. Fictions proceeding from such feelings, and also connected, as they were in the case of the disciples, with the real interests of life, must be of a different character from those thrown out in the mere wantonness of imagination. Hence the appearance of simplicity, earnestness, and reality, which in the midst of palpable inconsistencies, pervade the evangelic histories, and render even their fictions unique. Hence also the reason of the superiority of the evangelic style to most of the similar fictions in the apocryphal books; for as these were written at later times, the immediate impressions produced by the advent of Jesus had become much weakened. In short, in the stories of the resurrection and ascension of Jesus we see traces of the sentiments awakened in some inhabitants of an eastern and imaginative clime, at an eventful period of their country's history, by the life, precepts, and sudden death, of one of the most extraordinary persons in history.

It is undoubtedly more gratifying to enter into the feelings of the disciples, and, transporting ourselves in imagination to Jerusalem, Bethany, and the Mount of Olives, now become desolate by the absence of their master, whose

conversation and undertaking had formerly rendered every hill and village a place of interest—to listen with anxiety to the reports of those who say he is risen; to allow our wishes to overcome distrust; to imagine that the risen Messiah is still walking the earth, secure in his immortal state from further attempts of his enemies; to expect him at times to throw aside his invisible veil, and to look for him on the mountain, high road, and lake; to believe that his now divine nature enables him to assume different forms at pleasure, and to convert each dimly seen or indistinctly remembered shape into Jesus; and, when he seems finally to have left the earth, to see him ascending to the right hand of God, there to await the appointed time for revealing his kingdom. But imagination and feeling are unsafe guides in an inquiry into facts. The real occurrence is often found to bear no proportion in grandeur to the shape which it has assumed in contemplation. And in the circumstances attending the death of Jesus, we are forced to see a striking instance of the tendency of the mind to invest ordinary events with a higher beauty and interest than unimpassioned observation alone could discover, and to give to the common places of the world an impress of that higher life and perfection toward which it seems borne by its own nature. The disappearance of the body of the crucified Nazarene loses the mysterious grandeur which its connexion with themes most interesting to mankind had drawn around it, and shrinks into a comparatively poor and trifling incident, when we approach for close inspection; but the sublime views which it was in part the occasion of bringing forth, and the moral revolution which it contributed to promote, are in themselves deeply-interesting facts, which have an important bearing on every inquiry concerning the ultimate destination of the human mind.

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A REFUTATION OF THE SUPERNATURAL ORIGIN OF CHRISTIANITY.

ARTICLE VII.—CRITICISMS ON THE MIRACLES OF THE FOUR GOSPELS.*

IN common life marvellous tales are often met with, which, on taking the trouble to trace them back through various stages to their source, we find to have originated in something perfectly intelligible and natural. And when we have done this in some instances, we conclude that the same result would follow in the case of similar tales, coming to us through the same channels, although in this latter case we might not have the means of following up such a tedious investigation.

For instance,—Irenæus says "There were some who heard Polycarp relate, how St. John, going one day to the bath in Ephesus, and finding the heretic Cerinthus in it, started back instantly without bathing, crying out, Let us run away, lest the bath should fall upon us while Cerinthus, the enemy of truth, is in it." Iren. l. iii. c. 3. Epiphanius tells the same story of Ebion, and adds that, "St. John had never before made use of the public baths, till he was sent thither on this occasion by divine inspiration, to give this open testimony of his detestation of heresy." Feu-ardentius, in his notes on this passage of Irenæus, says that Jerome, in his treatise against the Luciferians, affirms that "immediately after the retreat of St. John, the bath actually fell down, and crushed Cerinthus to death." An ordinary event is thus grown into a miracle of some magnitude.

There is no reason why we should not apply the same mode of investigation to the narratives of the writers preceding Irenæus, viz. those of the New Testament.

In Matthew ch. iv., and Mark i.,

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there is an account of Jesus calling Peter to follow him, whilst he was fishing at the sea of Galilee. Luke relates the same occurrence, adding a miraculous draught of fishes, ch. v. John adds a miraculous fire of coals to broil the fish, and a prophecy of Peter's death; and makes Jesus do the whole after his resurrection. xxi.

Here, again, we see the very natural progress of a story during sixty-four years, from a simple occurrence into a cluster of miracles. And it gives us reason to think that other accounts of miracles would also be easily explicable if we had the means of stopping them at each stage.

Matthew and Mark relate that Jesus was baptized by John the Baptist, and that he saw the spirit descending upon himself like a dove. Luke says that the spirit did descend in a bodily shape, like a dove. John adds, that this descent of the spirit had been foretold to John the Baptist. By the time of Justin, there was also a fire kindled in the Jordan. Dial. with Trypho.

John alone gives the story of the marriage feast, where the water was turned into wine, in which there are these marks of fiction: "When they wanted wine, the mother of Jesus saith unto him, They have no wine." There appears no reason why Jesus should be applied to for wine, which it was the business of the host to furnish. "Jesus saith unto her, Woman, what hast thou

* These articles are abridged from "Hennel's Inquiry concerning the Origin of Christianity." The work to which reference has previously been made.

1. *John II. 4. — Quid mihi, et tibi est mulier?
nondum venit hora mea.*

to do with me? mine hour is not yet come." This last seems to be a favourite phrase of John, vii. 6, xiii. 1, xvi. 21; but it is unnatural from Jesus on such an occasion. "His mother saith unto the servants, Whatsoever he saith unto you, do it." This implies a power of foresight in his mother, for as yet Jesus had done no miracle, and had not intimated that he was about to give any orders to the servants. And, after all, his kinsmen who were there did not believe in him. John vii. 5, Mark iii. 21. Now in this instance we have no means of detecting the progress of exaggeration by comparing the story with another account; but, having once seen reason to be suspicious of the writer's veracity, it is more reasonable to suppose the simple fact to have been, that Jesus was once in his life present at a marriage feast, and that some of his disciples in after-times endeavoured to honour him by attributing to him a miracle on the occasion, than to believe a story loaded with such improbabilities.

Matthew says, that Jesus touched the hand of Peter's wife's mother, "And the fever left her, and she arose and ministered unto them." Mark, although apparently borrowing from him, makes the affair resemble a miracle more by saying "*immediately* the fever left her, and she ministered unto them;" and Luke completes it by saying, "it was a *great fever*," and "*immediately she arose* and ministered unto them." Now the variations, although perhaps made innocently, are important; for the reality of the miracle depends upon the greatness of the fever, and upon the patient's exhibiting immediately some visible sign of recovery, such as rising.

A more striking instance of the same sort is the following. Matthew says, vii. 16, "When the even was come, they brought unto him many that were possessed with demons; and he east out the spirits with his word, and cured all that were sick."

Mark i. 32, "And at even when the sun did set, they brought unto him all that were diseased, and them that were possessed with demons. And all the city was gathered together at the door. And he healed many that were sick of divers diseases, and east out many demons; and suffered not the demons to speak, because they knew him."

Luke iv. 40, "Now when the sun was setting, all they that had any sick with divers diseases, brought them unto him; and he laid hands on every one of them, and healed them. *And demons also came out of many, crying out and saying, Thou art Christ, the Son of God. And he, rebuking them, suffered them not to speak: for they knew that he was Christ.*"

It is obvious that the story has gained materially at each narration.

Matthew says, that Jesus said to a paralytic man who believed in his power,

ix. 2—8, "Arise, take up thy bed, and go unto thine house. And he arose, and departed to his house."

Mark ii. 12, "And *immediately* he arose, *took up the bed*, and went forth *before them all*."

Luke v. 25, "And immediately he arose up before them, and took up that whereon he lay, and departed to his own house, *glorifying God*."

In such instances, the gradual exaggeration is very different from wilful falsehood, since the additional particulars doubtless seemed to the writers no less probable in themselves than edifying to the church.

Matthew says,

ix. 20, "A woman who was diseased with an issue of blood twelve years, came behind him, and touched the hem of his garment. For she said within herself, If I may but touch his garment I shall be whole. But Jesus turned him about, and when he saw her, he said, Daughter, be of good comfort; thy faith hath made thee whole. *And the woman was made whole from that hour.*"

The narrative is simple and probable enough up to the last sentence, which might very naturally be supplied by Matthew, on supposition, as a proper conclusion, for he does not say how the fact was known. But let us turn to Mark's account:

Mark v. 25, "And a certain woman who had an issue of blood twelve years, and had suffered many things of many physicians, and had spent all that she had, and was nothing bettered, but rather grew worse; when she heard of Jesus, came in the press behind, and touched his garment. For she said, If I may but touch his clothes, I shall be

well; and straightway the fountain of her blood was dried up, and she felt in her body that she was healed of that plague; and Jesus, immediately knowing in himself that virtue had gone out of him, turned about in the press, and said, Who touched my clothes? And his disciples said unto him, Thou seest the multitude thronging thee, and sayest thou, Who touched me? And he looked round about to see her that had done this thing. But the woman, fearing and trembling, knowing what was done in her, came and fell down before him, and told him all the truth. And he said unto her, Daughter, thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace, and be whole of thy plague."

Although Mark's additions have merely the appearance of amplifications upon Matthew, his account presents a much more decided miracle. And Luke has copied it in preference.

The feeding of the five thousand with five loaves and two fishes is one of the best-attested of the miracles, because it is related by all the four evangelists, and without important contradictions, although Matthew and John, at least, appear not to have copied from each other; also it is alluded to in two subsequent discourses. Yet, with all this, is it possible to say, that the evidence in support of this story is such as would entitle it to serious consideration if it were found in any other book? The earliest account, that of Matthew, is as follows:

xiv. 15—22, "And when it was evening, his disciples came to him, saying, This is a desert place, and the time is now past; send the multitude away, that they may go into the villages, and buy themselves victuals. But Jesus said unto them, They need not depart; give ye them to eat. And they say unto him, We have here but five loaves and two fishes. He said, bring them hither to me. And he commanded the multitude to sit down on the grass, and took the five loaves, and the two fishes, and looking up to heaven, he blessed, and brake, and gave the loaves to his disciples, and the disciples to the multitude. And they did all eat, and were filled: and they took up of the fragments that remained twelve baskets full. And they that had eaten were about five thousand men, beside women

and children. And straightway Jesus constrained his disciples to get into a ship, and to go before him unto the other side, while he sent the multitudes away."

The only important additions in the other accounts are, that Mark says, they sat down in ranks, by hundreds, and by fifties; Luke, that they sat by fifties in a company; and John names Philip and Andrew as the disciples to whom Jesus addressed himself.

Now, in Matthew xv. and Mark viii. we find a similar story of the feeding of four thousand men with *seven* loaves and a few fishes, *seven* baskets being taken up of the fragments: which story seems to be only another version of the former, because, Firstly, They agree with each other in the order of the speeches and events, and almost in the words. Secondly, In the latter story the disciples appear not to have the slightest remembrance of the first miraculous feeding, but ask, "Whence should we have bread in the wilderness to satisfy so great a multitude?" and Jesus in his answer shows the same unconsciousness of any similar occurrence. Thirdly, The scene agrees in each story: in the former, Jesus had been in Galilee, and had come by ship into a desert place; in the latter, he is on a mountain near the sea of Galilee. Fourthly, After each miracle Jesus sends the multitude away, and passes over the sea. Fifthly, Luke and John relate only the feeding of five thousand.

Consequently, Matthew tells the same story twice, and contradicts himself notably in all his numbers. From xvi. 9, 10, it is plain that he considered that he had related two separate occurrences, which renders it probable that he merely gave both accounts as he found them; the different way of narrating the same story in the church having caused it to grow into two before he wrote. But in whatever way the doubling originated, it being admitted that both stories must refer to the same incident, this reflection arises,—since the two narratives differ from each other so much concerning the number of baskets-full taken up, and of the multitude filled, may not the real transaction differ from them both so far as that a *less* number of baskets-full were

taken up, and that a *less* number of persons than the whole multitude were fed?—on which two points the miracle depends.

Since Mark and Luke appear to have borrowed from Matthew, their testimony in this case is of little value. Every tradition concerning Christ was doubtless repeated by hundreds in the church; and, after forty years, an additional narrator added little or nothing to its credibility. Matthew and John alone have any title to be considered as independent witnesses; but they, too, may have depended upon the account of some one disciple, perhaps John himself; although even he does not state that he was an eye-witness. In fact, we have not an account from any one person on whom we can *depend* as having been present; we are obliged to rest this important point on an *inference*, viz., that John must have been amongst "the disciples."

The discourses which allude to these miracles bear strong marks of fiction. In Matthew xvi. 6—12, the disciples, accustomed as they were to disputes on the doctrines of the Pharisees and Sadducees, and immediately after a discussion with some of these two sects, cannot understand Jesus when he tells them to "beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees." And shortly after they are supposed to have witnessed the two miraculous supplies of loaves, they appear distressed at having forgotten to bring bread, and not one of them thinks of applying to Jesus. Could any set of men in such circumstances really be so dull as to need the reproof attributed to Jesus, "O ye of little faith . . . do ye not remember the five loaves of the five thousand, and how many baskets ye took up? Neither the seven loaves of the four thousand, and how many baskets ye took up?" But such inconsistencies, although betraying the fiction to the reader, might be overlooked by an incautious writer, inclined to the marvellous, and giving himself little pains to preserve strict coherence between his materials.

Again, in John vi. 26, Jesus is made to say, "Ye seek me not because ye saw the miracles, but because ye did eat of the loaves, and were filled." Yet immediately afterwards the people, to

whom he speaks thus, say, "What sign shewest thou then that we may see and believe thee? What dost thou work? Our fathers did eat manna in the desert; as it is written, he gave them bread from heaven to eat." The people thus appear to have forgotten the miraculous feeding as quickly and as completely as the disciples; and Jesus himself in his answer takes no farther notice of it; for instead of appealing to it as a sign already given, he merely says, that he himself is the true bread from heaven. Can any one imagine, if the miraculous feeding had really taken place, that the people would have made such an absurd demand as to require for a sign, as the condition of their believing in Jesus, the very thing which they had just witnessed, viz., the giving them bread in the desert? The same explanation occurs here as in the instance above from Matthew—that there is probably a mixture of truth and fiction in the discourses as well as in the narrative. The demand for a sign was very likely to be really made, since Josephus says, that the leaders claiming divine inspiration generally pretended to give signs from heaven; and reasons have been suggested (chap. vi.) for believing that fictitious accounts of miracles were invented in later times to serve in the controversy with the opponents of the church.

When such difficulties are found to clog the narratives of Matthew and John, it seems to require a more established character for accuracy, impartiality, and freedom from the disposition to invent or exaggerate, than belongs to either of them, to compel our belief of such a story on the strength chiefly of their testimony; and the more so, when there are such obvious means of accounting for the existence of the story through that practice of exaggeration which seems to have been so common in the early church. With the exception of one verse, the 20th, Matthew's whole account seems not unnatural. Jesus was one evening in the desert, and commanded his disciples to distribute what food they had amongst the multitude. He gave thanks on breaking the bread, as was usual among the Essenes. In the darkness and confusion, (for, notwithstanding the command to sit down

in companies, those who are used to large assemblies will imagine that the voice of twelve disciples alone could not have enforced very strict order amongst five thousand hungry men, besides women and children), it was impossible to know how many had eaten, and how far they felt satisfied. In relating the incident afterwards, the desire to put Jesus on a level with Moses led one of the disciples, possibly John, to add that all the multitude were filled; and subsequently, in another narration, it was added, that twelve baskets-full were left. But here the fictitious parts disclose themselves by their want of coherence. The twelve baskets-full startle the reader, who involuntarily exclaims, "Where did they come from, and for what purpose?" since, up to the middle of verse 20, Matthew appears to mean that Jesus had divided only the five loaves and two fishes, and that the multitude were filled with what they had from these, giving no hint of a multiplication of the loaves, or of the appearance of fresh loaves, which one would think must have attracted the attention of the beholders, and formed one of the most striking parts of the incident. This clause concerning the quantity of the fragments seems evidently to have been added to the first story, that the people were all filled, by Matthew or some other incautious narrator, who in his eagerness to magnify the miracle, did not stop to consider whether his improvement cohered with the rest.

The discourse in John vi. 32—58 leads us to conjecture that some figurative and poetical descriptions of Christ's doctrine, as the bread from heaven, which he distributed in the desert, being repeated, after a time, in the style of facts, contributed to the formation of the story as it now stands.

Mark relates the cure of a blind man as follows:—

x. 46—52, "And they came to Jericho: and as he went out to Jericho with his disciples and a great number of people, blind Bartimeus, the son of Timeus, sat by the highway-side begging. And when he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to cry out, and say, Jesus thou son of David, have mercy on me. And many charged him that he should hold his peace: but he

cried the more a great deal, Thou son of David, have mercy on me. And Jesus stood still, and commanded him to be called. And they call the blind man, saying unto him, be of good comfort, rise; he calleth thee. And he, casting away his garment, rose, and came to Jesus. And Jesus answered and said unto him, What wilt thou that I should do unto thee? The blind man said unto him, Lord, that I might receive my sight. And Jesus said unto him, Go thy way; thy faith hath made thee whole, or hath saved thee (*σεσωκε σε*). And immediately he received his sight, and followed Jesus in the way."

The answer of Jesus is remarkable, for it does not pledge him to the instant recovery of the blind man's sight: it merely dismisses him with an undefined promise. It seems likely that the man did go away, was lost sight of in the crowd, and that the relators of the story soon amplified it with the addition, "immediately he received his sight." But it might be asked, Did any body see him afterwards? had he his sight then, and how was it known that he had been blind? These questions were fully provided for in the edition of the story published about twenty-five or thirty years later, viz., in John. ch. ix. Here, although it is admitted that the man *did not immediately* receive his sight, (for we are told that the man only saw after he had been to the pool of Siloam,) the account is rendered, on the whole, more marvellous by a cross-examination of the man and his parents by the Pharisees. That John refers to the same transaction may be gathered from these parts: verse 1, "And as Jesus passed by" . . . ver 7, the pool of Siloam implies that it was near Jerusalem . . . ver. 8, "The neighbours said, Is not this he that sat and begged?"—which all agrees with Mark, Verse 6, "He anointed his eyes with clay," contradicts Mark, but it agrees with Matthew xx. 34, "He touched their eyes," plainly a parallel passage to that in Mark, although Matthew has made two blind men, for the speeches and circumstances coincide almost literally. Luke has inserted Mark's account with little variation, except that he makes the affair happen as Jesus went unto Jericho, instead of going from it; and

he adds, that "all the people, when they saw it, gave praise unto God."

Now, the whole account in Mark has nothing miraculous, except the clause contradicted by John, that the man immediately received his sight. Admitting John's account of the cross-examination by the Pharisees to be true, and the affair is difficult to explain, except by supposing a real miracle or a contrived imposture. But all the dialogue added by John is no more than what might occur to a man of moderate invention, zealous to answer objections, and, as he himself declares, to make the church believe, xx. 31. And under this view all difficulty vanishes.

Matthew relates, ix. 27, another story of the cure of two blind men, after that of Jairus's daughter. Now, as Mark says nothing of these blind men after relating the same story of Jairus's daughter, and as parts of Matthew's two stories coincide with each other exactly, ("And as Jesus departed thence, two blind men followed him, crying and saying, Thou son of David, have mercy on us"—xx. 30, "And behold two blind men sitting by the way side, when they heard that Jesus passed by, cried out, saying, Have mercy on us, O Lord, thou son of David!") it seems most likely that Matthew here also relates the same story two different ways. Thus, for one cure of one blind man in Mark, there are two cures of two blind men in Matthew.

Matthew relates the story of a centurion's servant or child, *παῖς*, viii. 5—13, which ends thus: "And Jesus said, Go thy way, and as thou hast believed, so be it done unto thee. And his servant was healed in the self-same hour." Luke says, vii. 10, "And they that were sent, returning to the house, found the servant well that had been sick." And John, in a story which has so many points of agreement with Matthew's, that it seems to be founded on the same incident, says, iv. 51—53, "And as he was now going down, his servants met him, and told him, saying, Thy son liveth. Then inquired he of them the hour when he began to amend: and they said unto him, Yesterday, at the seventh hour, the fever left him. So the father knew that it was

at the same hour in which Jesus said unto him, Thy son liveth; and himself believed, and his whole house."

Here the vague assertion in Matthew, which gives no particulars, and therefore might seem to be merely the narrator's own inference from the words of Jesus, is very amply filled up in the later narratives. But had the authors of these acquired information of additional facts, or did they merely give an amplified edition of the first story? It is evident that the additions in Luke and John might easily be suggested by Matthew's brief conclusion: but, on the other hand, it seems extraordinary that he, the earliest narrator of the three, should be ignorant of those important circumstances on which the evidence of the miracle rested; or, if knowing them, that he should pass them over in so slovenly a manner, whilst he gives the rest of the story very circumstantially.

Read John's account, and you find a decided and circumstantially related miracle; go back about twenty-five years to Luke, and the miraculous part is reduced to a brief sentence; approach still nearer to the source, and in Matthew the miracle has as much the appearance of being a matter of inference as of knowledge. How can we avoid suspecting that, if earlier testimony could be obtained, all that was known of the matter would be found to end at the words of Jesus, "Go thy way, and as thou hast believed, so be it done unto thee?" From which it was concluded that the patient was healed.

In common life, accounts are sometimes met with, the marvellous part of which is much reduced when we can obtain *additional independent testimony* concerning the original fact; and when this has been found to be the case in some instances, we look with suspicion on other marvellous accounts coming from the same source.

So it is with Matthew. In some instances Mark serves as a check upon him; for, although Mark for the most part borrowed from Matthew, and in such places shows a manifest disposition to enhance the miraculous by many little exaggerations and improvements; yet, in a few places, he appears evidently, from the nature of the particulars added, to bring information

gathered from other sources, possibly from Peter; and in several of these the miracle is rendered very doubtful.

Matthew says, in relating the cure of the lunatic, xvii. 18, "And Jesus rebuked the demon, and he departed out of him: and the child was cured from that very hour." Any one would gather from this that an instantaneous cure was performed; but we want more precise particulars of what was *seen* to take place; for the departure of the demon was an invisible operation. Mark's account is so different that he seems to have obtained some additional information as to this occurrence: he says, ix. 25, "When Jesus saw that the people came running together, he rebuked the foul spirit, saying unto him, Thou dumb and deaf spirit, I charge thee, come out of him, and enter no more into him. *And the spirit cried, and rent him sore*, and came out of him; and he was as one dead; in-somuch that many said, He is dead. But Jesus took him by the hand, and lifted him up, and he arose." All which throws the miracle into doubt; for the fits, which had lasted already some time, did not cease immediately at Jesus' command, but continued so violently, that the falling down might be from mere exhaustion.

Now, since Matthew has related this as an indisputable miracle, he may not have had a better foundation for his other numerous miracles of casting out demons, iv. 24, viii. 16, although, for want of particulars, we cannot judge so well of these. Another passage in Mark, however, confirms the idea that many might be explained in the same way, i. 26, "And Jesus rebuked him, saying, Hold thy peace, and come out of him. *And when the unclean spirit had torn him*, and cried with a loud voice, he came out of him."

Matthew relates the withering of the barren fig-tree thus:—

xxi. 19, "And when he saw a fig-tree in the way, he came to it and found nothing thereon, but leaves only; and said unto it, Let no fruit grow on thee henceforward for ever. And presently (*παρρηρημα* usually translated instantly, or on the spot,) the fig-tree withered away. And when the disciples saw it, they marvelled saying, How soon,

παρρηρημα, is the fig-tree withered away!"

What must we think of this story, if the fig-tree was only found to be withered *the next day*? but so it was, according to Mark.

xi. 13, "And seeing a fig-tree afar off, having leaves, he came, if haply he might find anything thereon; and when he came to it he found nothing but leaves; for the time of figs was not yet. And Jesus answered and said unto it, No man eat fruit of thee hereafter for ever. And his disciples heard it. And they come to Jerusalem . . . And when even was come he went out of the city. And in the morning as they passed by, they saw the fig-tree dried up from the roots. And Peter calling to remembrance, saith unto him, Master, behold the fig-tree which thou cursedst is withered away. And Jesus answering saith unto them, Have faith in God. For verily I say unto you, that whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed and be cast into the sea: and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass, he shall have whatsoever he saith."

The rejection of the miracle does not require us to suppose a contrivance on the part of Jesus to have the fig-tree withered. The character of Messiah, which he believed himself to possess, would not allow him to stoop to art of so low a kind; but it might allow of his relieving himself from the awkward appearance of disappointment on finding no fruit, and thereby maintaining his dignity in the eyes of his followers, by concluding the matter with a prophetic curse upon the tree. Yet he merely said that no man should hereafter eat fruit of it; which required no immediate change in the tree to save his credit, for no fruit could possibly be found on it before another season, when probably the affair would be forgotten. Nevertheless the tree being in the highway, was either casually or intentionally injured by some of the crowd; and the next morning, any altered appearance would be enough to suggest a miraculous fulfilment of the curse. Since one principal feature of the miracle in Matthew, the instantaneousness of the withering, is destroyed by Mark, it is

reasonable to conjecture that the proof of the miracle put forward by Mark himself, the drying up of the tree from the roots, would, in its turn, be much modified by some still more searching account.

It was the custom of Jesus to take occasion from common-place incidents to utter predictions or other remarkable sayings. When events in any degree corresponded, the predictions were most likely to be preserved, as in the case of the fig-tree. Yet there is one prediction recorded without any corresponding event, viz., the promise of the tribute-money from the fish's mouth, Matt. xvii. 27. Matthew does not say that the fish was taken; and the others do not even allude to the conversation. If anything of the sort had really been done by Peter, we should have expected some mention of it, at least, from his follower Mark.

The two stories of the blind men in Matthew represent them as receiving their sight immediately when their eyes were touched. The story in Mark, of the blind man at Bethsaida, cannot be identified with either of the former, but it may be compared with them, in order to shew the different aspect which a miracle of this kind may assume when related more circumstantially. For this is evidently a story which Mark had obtained from some other source than Matthew; since, besides the remarkable character of its particulars, it is introduced in a place where there is nothing corresponding to it in Matthew, although the parts both before and after it agree with the latter.

Mark viii. 22—27, "And he cometh to Bethsaida, and they bring a blind man unto him, and besought him to touch him. And he took the blind man by the hand, and led him out of the town; and when he had spit on his eyes, and put his hands upon him, he asked him if he saw ought. And he looked up and said, I see men as trees walking. After that he put his hands again upon his eyes, and made him look up: and he was restored, and saw every man clearly. And he sent him away to his house, saying, Neither go into the town, nor tell it to any in the town. And Jesus went out, and his disciples, into the town of Cæsarea Philippi."

Here Jesus tries twice before he appears to succeed; which is totally inconsistent with the idea of divine power, but agrees very well with the supposition that the case was one of imperfect amaurosis, and that the walk from the town, the repeated application of the hands to the eyes, and the excitement of imagination produced by the expectation of miraculous aid, acted gradually as stimulants upon the torpid nerves, and permitted a temporary, or possibly a permanent, recovery of sight.

Amaurosis, or gutta serena, is a kind of blindness in which the sensibility of the retina and optic nerve is either partly or wholly lost. It is sometimes an intermittent disorder, appearing and subsiding at intervals. When the eye remains at all conscious of light, or retains any power of seeing, it is called *imperfect amaurosis*. Sometimes during the progress of the disease the sight is cloudy, and the patient can see better in a light than a dark situation; sometimes he sees black specs, net-like appearances, streaks, and snake-like figures. He always sees plainer for a short time after the outward use of tonic remedies, such as hartshorn, cold water, &c. Richter relates a case of almost total blindness, in which the patient was able to see very well for an hour after drinking champagne. He also mentions a woman who had entirely lost her sight, but who was in the habit of acquiring it again for half an hour by walking briskly in her garden. Sometimes patients who are wholly blind have a small part of the retina still susceptible of the impression of light, usually situated toward one side of the eye. The disease being generally occasioned by torpor or paralysis of the nerves, stimulants and tonics act as remedies by restoring the nervous activity. Electricity is sometimes used with effect. Amaurosis produced by wounds of the eyebrow has occasionally been cured by strong frictions upon the eyebrows, and by rubbing the same part for a considerable time with emollient oils and ointments. See *Richter's Principles of Surgery*.

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A REFUTATION OF THE SUPERNATURAL ORIGIN OF CHRISTIANITY. *

ARTICLE VII.—CRITICISMS ON THE MIRACLES OF THE FOUR GOSPELS.* (concluded).

In this case Jesus sought privacy for performing the miracle, whilst in the cases of demons and other diseases he did not object to exert his supposed power in public. This seems to indicate that he was aware of greater difficulty in cases of blindness, and that he considered more solemn preparation, or more earnest faith, as essential to success.

Matthew, Mark, and John relate that one of the disciples cut off the high priest's servant's ear, on the apprehension of Jesus. Luke alone adds, "And he touched his ear, and healed him," xxii. 51. The silence of those both before and after Luke concerning such an important particular, whilst relating the connected circumstances,—of John, supposed to be an eye-witness; and of Mark, who was acquainted with Peter, an eye-witness; and especially the omission of the story by John after it had been once promulgated;—all this seems nearly equivalent to a denial of it.

Luke also relates, on his own authority alone, that whilst Jesus was praying in the garden "there appeared unto him an angel from heaven strengthening him," xxii. 63. Matthew, Mark, and John, who must have had, at least, as good means as Luke of knowing this circumstance, relate the prayer without mentioning it. But it seems out of place to criticise as a matter of fact what appears so plainly to have been originally a beautiful poetical addition to the narrative of the close of Jesus's career.

The foregoing instances shew that the four Evangelists are not to be con-

sidered as writers who made it their study to adhere throughout to strict facts, but who allowed themselves occasionally to blend with these such fiction as appeared likely to increase the interest and efficacy of their narratives. This ascertained character of the narrators must be taken into account in the examinations of other miracles which do not fall exactly under the foregoing heads.

Matthew has an account of the stilling of a tempest by Jesus, viii. 23—27, which Mark and Luke appear to have borrowed with little variation. The miracle consists in the instantaneousness of the calm, which may be an exaggeration similar to that of the instantaneous withering of the fig-tree.

Matthew relates, that, after the feeding of the five thousand, Jesus walked on the water, and that Peter quitted the ship, and walked on the water also. Mark relates the same thing, omitting Peter's part. John also omits Peter's walking on the water, but adds a new miracle, that the ship was immediately at the land whither it went. The fact might be, that Jesus rejoined them at a different part of the shore from that which they had left, and that walking near or in the shallow water, he appeared in the darkness to be walking on the water, which impression was afterwards worked out by John, or some other disciple, into the present story. Peter's beginning to sink might have been originally

* These articles are abridged from "Hennel's Inquiry concerning the Origin of Christianity." The work to which reference has previously been made.

a description of his temporary apostacy, which Matthew put into the shape of fact; but Mark, who knew the Apostle, was probably aware that this was a misinterpretation, and therefore omitted it. After the feeding of the four thousand, which, it has been seen, has every appearance of being founded on the same incident as that of the five thousand, nothing is said of walking on the water, but simply that Jesus "took ship and came into the coasts of Magdala."

The transfiguration is related by Matthew, Mark, and Luke, who were not present; but not by John, who was said to be one of those present. It is not alluded to in any other part of the New Testament, except in the second or spurious Epistle of Peter. It has the appearance of a poetical tale, invented after the death of Jesus, for the purpose of putting him on an equality with Moses and Elias; for Moses' face shone when he came down from the mount; both he and Elias heard the divine voice speaking directly to them; and both were supposed by many of the Jews to have ascended into heaven. Possibly it originated in some dream of Peter, which, like the temptation, soon came to be related as matter of fact. But, whatever were its origin, there are these objections to its reality. Peter, on seeing the two men with Jesus, immediately knows them be Moses and Elias, although he had never seen these two, and nobody had told him they were about to appear. Luke says, their discourse was concerning Jesus's decease, which he should accomplish at Jerusalem, although Peter and they that were with him were heavy with sleep. The offer of Peter, to make three tabernacles, seems unnatural and ill-timed for the witness of a real fact of the nature described. Jesus charges the disciples, Matt. xvii. 9, to tell the vision to no man until the Son of Man be risen again from the dead; although, from John xx. 9, it would seem that he had never given them notice of such an event. Moreover, the whole story was only published a considerable time afterwards, for Luke says, ix. 36, "they kept it close, and told no man in those days any of those things which they had seen."

John relates that Jesus uttered in

public a prayer ending with these words:—

"Father, glorify thy name. Then came there a voice from heaven, saying, I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again. The people therefore that stood by said, that it thundered: others said, an angel spake to him, xii. 28, 29."

I transcribe here Middleton's remarks on the Bath Kol:—"The spirit of prophecy, which continued in the Jewish church till after its restoration from the Babylonish captivity, had entirely ceased under the second temple, for three centuries at least before Christ. But there succeeded to it, as all the Jewish writers unanimously testify, an *oracular voice from heaven*, which was given occasionally to the leading rabbis or teachers of the law, to direct them how to act and speak on particular emergencies. It is said to have been accompanied generally with a kind of thunder, out of which it issued in a clear and articulate manner, and thence derived its name of Bath Kol, the daughter-voice, or daughter of a voice. The Bath Kol, says Lightfoot, was this: 'When a voice of thunder came out of Heaven, another voice came out of it.' (*Lightfoot's Works*, vol. ii. p. 138; in Matt. iii. 17.) This way of divine instruction is affirmed to have been subsisting during the time of our Saviour, and to the final dissolution of the Jewish state; and is considered by all their doctors as an inferior kind of prophecy, or a sort of twilight indulged to them after the sun of prophecy was set; (*Spencer on the Vulgar Prophecies*, ch. vii. p. 126;) and from this pretended source they derived the greater part of those traditions with which they corrupted the law of Moses:" however, Dr. Spencer said, "the Bath Kol was a Jewish fable."

Now, supposing that there was at the time referred to a clap of thunder, which, according to John himself, was, in the opinion of many present, all that happened, how natural it was for John or other disciples to suppose it to be the Bath Kol, and first to imagine, and then to relate, the words of the divine voice;

The raising of Jairus's daughter, Matt. ix. 18, Mark v. 22, Luke viii. 41, is comparatively well attested; for Mark, who here plainly brings additional information, agrees in the chief points

with Matthew. It cannot be supposed to have been a concerted contrivance between Jairus and Jesus; for such a contrivance could only have had for its object to convince the multitude of the miraculous character of Jesus, and the scene would have been acted in public; whereas the multitude were excluded, and Jesus admitted only the father, the mother, and three of his own disciples—Peter, James, and John. Since Jairus applied to him in public, and professed his belief, he could not refuse to exert his supposed miraculous power, which, for ought he knew, might be sufficient even to raise the dead, since it had been found competent to cast out demons. Yet the privacy which he sought for the actual performance of the miracle, when his previous announcement to the multitude would seem to entitle them also to the means of conviction, at least by an immediate report from those present, indicates some latent distrust. The disciples, according to Mark and Luke, were even forbidden to tell any one what had taken place in the house, which secrecy is inexplicable, on the supposition of the miracle having been really performed; for as yet there was no disposition to make him a king, and he had not been backward to do publicly numerous other miracles, of a more dubious sort to modern inquirers, but indubitable in the eyes of the Jewish multitude, viz. casting out demons, and healing the sick. If the object of the miracle were to prove his divine authority, why should such a decided miracle as raising a dead person be kept secret?

The point however, on which the miracle depends is, that the child was really dead. Now, the three accounts before us state that Jesus said, "The maid is not dead, but sleepeth." So that if we believe Jesus himself literally, the matter is explained at once; and the existence of the story as it now stands is accounted for thus: Matthew, or his informant, desirous to exhibit the affair as a miracle, by a slight variation converted the message, that the child was dying, into an assertion that she was dead, *ετελευτησεν*. Mark, from his additional means of information, gave the first original message, correctly; but having also Matthew before him, and being himself well disposed to represent the event as miraculous, he in-

serted a second message, coming up fully to Matthew's statement, that the maid was dead. This point being established at the outset of the story, the rest was accommodated to a figurative interpretation of the words of Jesus, and with this view probably the addition, "they laughed him to scorn," was made. For the reality of this is inconsistent with the opinion which the people of Galilee had of Jesus as a prophet, and which was shared by Jairus and his household, as is seen by their sending for him. With respect to the recovery of the maiden, Matthew merely says, "he took her by the hand, and the maid arose;" Mark says, "straightway she arose, and walked," which might be one of his frequent exaggerations.

Leaving aside the question of the Evangelists' accuracy, the story, to have any pretension to truth, must have come from one of these six—Peter, James, John, Jairus, his wife, or his daughter; and how can it be shewn that each of these was incapable of adding such variations as were required to make the story miraculous? And it cannot be doubted that, if any of these had issued it; the story would have appeared sufficiently authentic to the majority of the church.

But after all the most simple conclusion may be this: Jesus commanded secrecy to those who were with him in the chamber; he was obeyed, and consequently no one else knew exactly what took place there; but, as Matthew says, "a report went abroad into all that land," and that report is the story which we now have.

Another account of raising a dead person, viz., the widow's son at Nain, is related by Luke only, vii. 11—15. He places it the day after the cure of the centurion's servant (or son) at Capernaum. Now, Matthew and John, who have related this cure, say nothing concerning the widow's son. Luke's motive for inserting the story seems to be the same as for inserting verse 21, viz., to make it appear that John's disciples had ocular demonstration of the truth of the message they were to carry to him. In Matthew's account the mode of expression might be taken to imply this, for he makes Jesus say, in answer to the question of John's disciples, "Art thou he that should come, or do we look for

another?"—"Go and shew John again, *απαγγειλατε Ιωαννη*, the things which ye do hear and see: (the present tense, & *ακουετε και βλεπετε*;) the blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the Gospel preached to them." Luke copies nearly all Matthew's account of this discourse concerning John, and adds, ver. 21, "*And in that same hour* he cured many of their infirmities, and plagues, and of evil spirits, and unto many that were blind he gave sight." All this mass of miracles, not noticed elsewhere, was plainly done, or said by Luke to be done, in order to make the words in Matthew "which ye hear and see" literally true. Now, the raising of the dead at Nain, which Luke makes to be done also within the knowledge of John's disciples, completes the list of miracles mentioned in the message, and has therefore the appearance of being inserted for that purpose. It seemed the more necessary, because Matthew had not given any account of raising the dead which could warrant such a message; for although he, perhaps, had in his mind his own story of Jairus's daughter, yet Mark had prevented subsequent writers from citing this for the purpose, by saying that the disciples were commanded to tell no man of it. And it has been shewn to be highly probable that Luke had both Matthew's and Mark's Gospels before him.

The obvious objection to the reality of this miracle is the little notice taken of it. There are only three stories of raising the dead by Jesus, and this resurrection at Nain was better worth publishing than that of Jairus's daughter, since it occurred in the open street, and the death was less doubtful. Matthew and Mark could not have forgotten or wilfully suppressed it, and consequently did not know of it.

John alone relates the raising of Lazarus, which, if his account were true, was the most splendid and public of all the miracles. For, according to him, it was done before friends and enemies, without any of the usual prohibitions to tell of it: many came to see Lazarus at the supper at Bethany, and the people bare record of it when Jesus entered publicly into Jerusalem.

But, notwithstanding all this, neither Matthew, Mark, nor Luke, appear to have had any knowledge of the affair; for not only are they silent concerning it, but their accounts do not easily admit of its introduction. John puts the supper, at which Lazarus sat after his resurrection, *one day before* the public entry into Jerusalem. But Matthew, as well as Mark and Luke, makes it appear that Jesus made his entry into Jerusalem on coming direct from Jericho, a distance of about twenty miles; and that *after this* he took up his abode at Bethany. John's story of Lazarus requires, therefore, another previous abode at Bethany, which breaks in violently upon the order of events in Matthew, whose narrative seems to exclude the possibility of Jesus having already resided for some time so near to Jerusalem as fifteen furlongs. See Matt. xix. 1; xx. 18, 29; xxi. 1.

The supper at Bethany, also, is related by Matthew long after the entrance, although he is not precise as to the date. xxvi. 6.

This supper is proved to be the same as the one at which John says Lazarus was present, by the alabaster box of ointment, and the speech of Judas for the poor. Yet Matthew and Mark seem quite ignorant of that which John says attracted the Jews, the presence of the revived Lazarus.

The story of Lazarus seems again to be forced upon the attention of the first three Evangelists, when they relate the entry of Jesus into Jerusalem, and the conduct of the multitude; for John says, that the people then bare record of his having raised Lazarus. But here also they make not the slightest allusion to it.

It is impossible to conceive any plausible reason for this concealment, when the same three Evangelists appear so willing to relate all the miracles they were acquainted with, and actually relate some which were said to be done in secret. That they had all forgotten this miracle so completely that it did not once occur to them whilst relating the connected circumstances, cannot be imagined; and if any miracle deserved a preference in the eyes of narrators disposed to do honour to Christ, or even to give a faithful account of him, it was this.

The Acts and Epistles nowhere allude to this story, although it would have afforded Paul a very good instance of the resurrection of the body. 1 Cor. xv. 35.

The first mention, therefore, of the most public and decisive of the miracles, appears in a writing published at Ephesus sixty years afterwards;—a distance both of time and place which rendered it easy to publish fictitious statements without fear of contradiction. Supposing that Jesus had really visited the tomb of Lazarus, and told his sisters that he would rise again; supposing, also, that the question had been raised, "Could not this man, who opened the eyes of the blind, have prevented Lazarus from dying?" we may imagine how great was the temptation, to a writer intent upon making his readers believe, to enlarge the incident, by a few additional sentences, into a convincing miracle. That the story was written with such a view appears throughout. xi. 15, "I am glad I was not there, to the intent ye may believe;"—42, "I said it, that they may believe that thou hast sent me." And although much of the story appears very natural, some parts seem to indicate an intermixture of fiction. Mary's speech, ver. 32, on seeing Jesus, is in the same words as Martha's, ver. 21. Martha's first speech implies an expectation that Jesus will raise Lazarus—"I know that even now whatsoever thou wilt ask of God, God will give it

thee;" but, on coming to the grave, she makes an objection to obeying the order of Jesus, which makes the story more dramatic, but is inconsistent with her previous expectation. The narration of what Martha said to Mary secretly, and of what took place in the house, in the same tone as the account of what was done where Jesus was, betrays the inventor rather than the eye-witness; for it can hardly be supposed that John went backward and forward to draw up a report of what happened at both places. The witness of a real event of such a kind could scarcely have refrained from entering into further particulars concerning the looks and words of Lazarus on receiving life again; but here the story stops short, as if the writer's purpose were accomplished in having related a miracle.

It is remarkable that the raising of Jairus's daughter, which was said to be done in secret, is related by three Evangelists; whilst the other two resurrections, which were said to be public, rest each on the testimony of one. The omission of an incident by one writer does not always invalidate the narration of it by another; but, considering the extreme importance of the last two miracles to the Christian cause, as well as their impressive nature, it does seem an insuperable objection that three out of the four Evangelists should have neglected or forgotten them.

ARTICLE VIII.—GENERAL OBJECTIONS TO THE MIRACLES OF JESUS.

I. He himself puts his miracles of healing upon a level with the performances of the Jewish physicians. Matt. xii. 27, "And if I by Beelzebub cast out devils, by whom do your children cast them out? therefore, they shall be your judges." If his cures could not more fairly be attributed to Beelzebub than those of the Jewish doctors, neither could they more properly be considered miracles. But it is only in the present age that such an inference excludes the miracle, because in Christ's own time the arts of healing and magic were

supposed to be closely related, and Josephus speaks several times of the casting out of demons as performed by miraculous means.

II. He recognized the attempts of others as real miracles, and made no distinction between them and his own. Mark. ix. 38, 39, "And John answered him, saying, Master, we saw one casting out devils in thy name, and he followeth not us; and we forbid him, because he followeth not us. But Jesus said, Forbid him not; for there is no man which shall do a miracle in my name

that can lightly speak evil of me." There have been many instances, in all ages of the church, of persons pretending to exorcise by merely using the name of some eminent saint or prophet; but no satisfactory proof of any thing miraculous is to be found in such stories, and in general they are considered undeserving of serious attention. Yet the performances of the pretender mentioned by Mark are no more questioned on the score of genuineness than those of Christ himself.*

III. He admits that there was more difficulty in performing some miracles than others. Matt. xvii. 21, "Howbeit this kind goeth not out, but by prayer and fasting."

IV. He generally required to see that the applicants fully believed in his miraculous power before he attempted the cure. Matt. ix. 27, "*Believe ye that I am able to do this?*" ix. 2, "Jesus, *seeing their faith*, said unto the sick of the palsy," &c. Mark. vi. 5, "And he could there do no mighty work, save that he laid hands upon a few sick folk, and healed them. And he marvelled *because of their unbelief*." This throws much doubt upon the miracle; for, besides the physical influence which the belief itself might have, the applicant's own credit became in some degree pledged to vouch for its performance. When a man has

solemnly protested that he believes a thing will happen, he is no longer a dispassionate observer, but he is ready to strain a point to make it appear that he was right. Thus those who had publicly declared their belief that Jesus could cure them, became in some measure interested parties; so that between the real physical effect produced on them, and their own goodwill to make it appear greater, a bystander might easily be led to think a miracle had been done. But a divine power could not need such a belief on the part of the applicants; on the contrary, one would rather expect it to be displayed where there was no such belief, in order that the miracle might be more indisputable.

V. The answers usually given by Jesus were of such a nature as to dismiss the applicants without any injury to his own credit, whatever might be the result. Matt. viii. 13, "Go thy way, and as thou hast believed, so be it done unto thee." ix. 29, "According to your faith be it unto you." xv. 23, "And his disciples besought him, saying, Send her away, for she crieth after us . . . 28, Jesus answered and said unto her, O woman, great is thy faith; be it unto thee even as thou wilt." Mark x. 52, "Go thy way; thy faith hath saved thee." John ix. 7, "Go, wash in the pool of Siloam."

VI. In Matthew and Mark, the *more decided* miracles, such as raising the dead, curing the blind, &c., are admitted to have been done in secret. Matt. viii. 4, "Jesus saith unto him, (the leper,) See thou tell no man, but go thy way, shew thyself to the priest," &c. ix. 30, "And Jesus straightly charged them, (the blind men,) saying, See that no man know it." Mark v. 43, "And he charged them straitly that no man should know it" (the raising of Jairus's daughter). vii. 36, "And he charged them that they should tell no man" (the cure of a deaf and dumb man). It is generally added, that, notwithstanding the secrecy of the affair itself, the *report* of it was soon published abroad. Now, since the best authorities, Jesus himself and those present, must have been silent, (for it can hardly be supposed that his immediate followers so boldly disobeyed him,) it may be fairly doubted whether

* Middleton says, (in the *Inquiry into the Miraculous Powers of the Early Church*,) the Fathers allowed the power of casting out devils to both Jews and Gentiles, as well before as after our Saviour's coming. Justin Martyr says, "All devils yield and submit to the name of Jesus, when they would not to any other name of their kings, prophets, or patriarchs; yet if any should exorcise them in the name of the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, they would in like manner submit. For your exorcists, as well as the Gentiles, use this art in exorcising, together with certain fumes and ligatures." *Dial with Trypho*, part 2.

"The Jews even now by this same invocation of the name of God drive away devils." *Irenæus*, 1. 2. c. 5.

"If a man invoke by the name of the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the devils will obey and do what they are commanded; but if he translate those names, according to their meaning, into any other language, they will have no force at all." *Origen con. Celsum*, l. 5.

the report, which by some means got abroad, was exactly true, and consequently whether the stories before us, founded probably on these reports (for in none of them do the writers say they were present, or name their authority) are exactly true; in which doubt we are obliged to bring in other considerations to help us to ascertain the real facts, as has been already attempted. The motive for Jesus's injunction of secrecy is supposed by some to be his fear lest the people should make him a king; but it is remarkable that the only Evangelist who attributes this fear to Jesus, John vi. 15, relates chiefly to miracles done in the most public manner, viz., the marriage feast, the feeding of the multitude, the raising of Lazarus, &c.; from which it appears to have been at least his impression, that Jesus did not in general seek secrecy for his miracles. Matthew and Mark themselves relate abundance of miracles of casting out demons, and healing the sick, as done in the most public manner. The exception, therefore, in the cases alluded to, leaves them open to one or other of these objections;—either that Jesus required the secrecy because the miracle would not bear public inspection; or that the narrators, aware that the miraculous part was a later addition, endeavoured to make the whole appear consistent by saying that it was by Jesus's command that it had been kept secret.

VII. The miracles were chiefly performed amongst the country people of Galilee, according to Matthew and Mark. The former says, in a loose manner, xxi. 14, "And the blind and the lame came to him in the temple, and he healed them." But with this exception, and that of the fig-tree, he gives no specific account of any one miracle from the arrival of Jesus at Jerusalem till his death.

VIII. When Jesus was asked to do a public miracle in attestation of his divine mission, he not only refused to do it, but did not even appeal to his previous miracles. Matt. xvi. 1—4, "The Pharisees also with the Sadducees came, and, tempting, desired him that he would shew them a sign from heaven. He answered and said unto them, When it is evening, ye say, It will be fair weather; for the sky is red.

And in the morning, It will be foul weather to-day; for the sky is red and lowering. O ye hypocrites, ye can discern the face of the sky; but can ye not discern the signs of the times? A wicked and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given unto it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas. And he left them, and departed." Nothing is said of the sign of Jonas in the corresponding place in Mark, viii. 11. A similar but more pointed application is related by John vi. 30, "They said therefore unto him, What sign shewest thou, that we may see and believe? What dost thou work? our fathers did eat manna in the desert." The answer is an assertion, not of his miraculous power, but that he himself is the bread from heaven. It is true that Jesus is made to appeal to his miracles in answer to John the Baptist's disciples, and several times in the discourses attributed to him by John v. 36, x. 38, xiv. 10. Yet the above instances are sufficient to shew that he did not usually rely upon them as the means of convincing opponents. Nor is it a sufficient answer that the applications were made to him in a captious spirit, and were therefore unworthy of notice. The demand of a sign or miraculous attestation has been acknowledged to be reasonable by all asserting the divine authority of Jesus after his own lifetime; consequently, from the days of Matthew and John to our own, Christians have been eager to meet it with plentiful accounts of miracles. Moreover, Jesus himself did not pass over the demand on such a pretext. John ii. 18, "Then answered the Jews and said unto him, What sign shewest thou unto us, seeing that thou doest these things? Jesus answered and said unto them, Destroy this temple (they were in the temple at Jerusalem). and in three days I will raise it up." From the following verses it appears that all about him at the time understood him to mean the real temple, and so Matthew and Mark seem to have understood it; for they each twice quote the saying, without giving the least hint that it had any other sense. Matt. xxvi. 61, xxvii. 40; Mark xiv. 58, xv. 29. John alone says, that Jesus meant the temple of his body, allowing, however, that it was only after he was risen

from the dead that this sense was attributed to the words. Now, if this were the true version of the matter, that Jesus intended his answer to be unintelligible or deceptive to the actual questioners, and convincing to his own disciples only after his death, he seems to have partially failed; for two out of the three Evangelists, who have mentioned the saying, appear to have been as much in the dark concerning its meaning as the Jews themselves. But if, like the latter, we take the saying in its obvious and literal sense, it shews that Jesus did not, on this occasion at least, object to the demand of a miraculous sign; but by his meeting it in this manner, rather than by doing a miracle, or by appealing to some noted one already done,* such as the raising of Lazarus, it is plain that the subsequent custom of referring objectors to these miracles was not adopted by himself. Consequently the genuineness of those parts of his discourses which appeal to his miracles becomes liable to suspicion; especially since other considerations lead us to conjecture that both John and Matthew were in the habit of attributing to Jesus sayings merely representing their own views and those of their own times.

IX. None of those on whom the miracles were said to be performed come forward themselves to attest them in the subsequent part of the history, or play any conspicuous part in the affairs of the church, as gathered from the Acts and Epistles. The author of the Gospel of Nicodemus, which appeared at the end of the third century, has endeavoured to remedy the omission by making the centurion, the blind men, &c., give evidence before Pilate; but the whole is plainly a forgery.

X. The supposed miracles had no effect on many of those who lived in the time of Jesus, and were most capable of appreciating them. John vii. 5,

* The clearing of the temple fixes the date of the conversation to the time after Jesus's last visit to Jerusalem.

"For neither did his brethren believe in him." xii. 37, "But though he had done so many miracles before them (the people,) yet they believed not on him." Matt. xi. 20, "Then began he to upbraid the cities wherein most of his mighty works were done, because they repented not." Mark vi. 52, "For they (the disciples) considered not the miracle of the loaves, for their heart was hardened." By comparing this with Mark xvi. 14, it is plain that the hardness of heart meant a backwardness to believe the miracle, although the account purports that it had just been done before them. Now, an imperfect belief immediately after the event, growing into certainty long afterwards, is just contrary to the process one would expect to see if a miracle had really been done. Then the conviction would be most vivid on the first sight of it. At first the senses declare unequivocally and impartially the impressions made upon them; but the memory seldom preserves long those impressions distinct and unmixed. Passion, prejudice, and interest, gradually diminish, add to, or confuse the image; till, at last, the view remaining in the mind, instead of being a faithful picture of the real event, is one formed by the joint contributions of the memory, the imagination, and the feelings. Thus, from the instance referred to, it appears that even the disciples had some difficulty in believing the miracles at first; and since the disbelief of them came to be stigmatized as hardness of heart, we may infer that their more confident assertion of them in later times was owing to a persuasion that scepticism on this point was a betrayal of the cause of their Master.

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A REFUTATION OF THE SUPERNATURAL ORIGIN OF CHRISTIANITY.

ARTICLE IX.—CRITICISMS ON THE MIRACLES OF THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES.*

It is plain from the Acts that the author himself took a zealous part in the affairs of the church, and it was therefore to be expected that he should share the prevailing disposition to do honour to the cause by publishing its miracles; accordingly, almost every transaction has a miraculous turn given to it. When Stephen is condemned, he sees Jesus in the heavens; when Philip goes to Gaza, it is by command of an angel of the Lord; when he approaches the chariot of the eunuch, it is also by command of the Spirit; and when he leaves him, he is caught away by the Spirit, and found at Azotus. Before Peter and Cornelius meet, Cornelius has a vision to tell him to send for Peter, and Peter has a vision to prepare him for the message. The angel of Cornelius goes into such particulars as to give him the address of Peter at Simon the tanner's, which he might very well have learned from common report, or from any one of the Christians in Judea. When Paul reaches the coast of Asia opposite to Macedonia, a vision appears to him in the night, to tell him to go over into Macedonia. When Herod dies of a disease, he is smitten by an angel of the Lord.

The first miracle, after the ascension, is the descent of the Spirit in the shape of cloven tongues, like as of fire, on the day of Pentecost. The Jews believed that their prophets spoke and acted under the influence of a divine inspiration coming upon them on certain occasions, called the Spirit of the Lord, or the Holy Ghost. In the prophet Joel, (ii. 28.) it is promised that,

in the future greatness of Israel, in addition to peace and fertility of soil, the Spirit should be given abundantly.

The disciples believing that their own times were those of the accomplishment of the prophecies, applied to their own society these promises of the Spirit. In circumstances favourable to excitement, at public meetings, on solemn occasions, at the baptism of new converts, and the like, the belief in and expectation of the influence was sufficient to bring the minds of some to a state of ecstasy, which was considered to be its actual manifestation; in this state the agitation of the mind found a vent in certain incoherent expressions, which being supposed to be the outpouring of the Spirit, and yet, in fact, being unintelligible, were called an unknown language. These fits, natural in some, were soon imitated and improved upon by others, for the sake of attracting attention. Some words of real foreign, or kindred languages, having found their way into these rhapsodies, a report might easily be spread, that the Holy Spirit gave the power of speaking in other languages. It is very probable that some excitement of this sort did take place at the assembly of the disciples on the day of Pentecost, and Luke has given the improved account which came to him some years afterwards. The rushing mighty wind might be a real circumstance exagger-

* These articles are abridged from "Hennel's Inquiry concerning the Origin of Christianity." The work to which reference has previously been made.

rated; the visible tongues of fire a later addition; the speech of the multitude, v. 7—12, the invention of Luke himself; and that of Peter what he considered Peter would have said on such an occasion, and which probably does in its main features represent Peter's sentiments correctly, since Luke (or Silas) must have often heard him.

There is no evidence elsewhere that the apostle had acquired supernaturally the use of other languages. That generally spoken throughout the eastern provinces of the Roman empire was the Greek; and owing to the continual intercourse with Roman tax-gatherers and soldiers, even the lower classes of Jews dwelling in towns could not but acquire some rude knowledge of it. Campbell acknowledges that the Greek of the New Testament is a "barbarous idiom." "The writings of the New Testament are such as, in respect of style, could not have been written but by Jews, and hardly even by Jews superior in rank and education to those whose names they bear." "The homeliness of their diction, when criticised by the rules of grammarians and rhetoricians, is what all the most learned and judicious of the Greek fathers frankly owned." "If any one contends," says Erasmus, "that the apostles were inspired by God with the knowledge of all tongues, and that this gift was perpetual in them, since every thing which is performed by a divine power is more perfect, according to Saint Chrysostom, than what is performed either in the ordinary course of nature or by the pains of man, how comes it to pass that the language of the apostles is not only rough and unpolished, but imperfect; also confused, and sometimes even plainly solecising and absurd? for we cannot possibly deny what the fact itself declares to be true.—When the apostles write in Greek, they borrow much from their own Hebrew; as at this day, men of little learning, when they talk Latin, always mix somewhat with it of their native tongue.

The cure of the lame man by Peter and John can be considered miraculous only on the strength of the statement that he had been lame from his birth, which was not easy for Luke to know in the case of a man forty years old.

Many a beggar receiving alms on the score of lameness is yet able, in some degree, to use his legs when helped up, and on a sudden impulse. A similar story is told of Paul, ch. xiv.; but here it is added that Paul looked at him, and perceived that he had faith to be healed; which was probably the case also in the former instance. The whole story of the lame man, and of the subsequent examination of Peter and John, bears the appearance of the warm and coloured representation of the partisan, rather than the cool account of an impartial observer. The length and vigour of the speeches ascribed to Peter, who is said to be filled with the Holy Ghost, compared with the tameness and want of argument on the part of his opponents, shews too evidently a disposition to set off the apostle to advantage. Even though the man who had been healed were present, such men as Annas and the rulers would surely have been clever enough to find something to say against it; but they send the apostles aside, and confer among themselves, saying, "What shall we do to these men? for, indeed, that a notable miracle hath been done by them is manifest to all them that dwell in Jerusalem, and we cannot deny it." This is more than a candid admission on the part of Annas and the council; it is the exaggeration of a zealous defender of the Apostles: for the miracle could not be manifest to *all* in Jerusalem; and that it was a real miracle, no one was obliged to say, or could say properly, until the man had been further examined, and the nature of his previous lameness as well as the reality of his cure had been better ascertained.

The story of Ananias and Sapphira may be accounted for, in great part, by the effect which spiritual terrors have been known to have upon persons both religious and weak-minded. The same ardour of faith, arising from the expectation of the coming of the Lord, which led the early church to acknowledge the necessity of giving up all temporal possessions, would render such terrors amongst them peculiarly strong; and upon minds which had undergone a struggle between conscience and the natural love of property, and remaining oppressed with the consciousness of duplicity, we can imagine that the me-

naces of the apostle must have fallen with tremendous effect. This, however, would hardly explain the death and burial of both parties within a few hours of Peter's speech; but here there may be an exaggeration similar to that in the case of Herod. Their death, happen when it might, would be supposed by the believers to be in punishment of their fraud upon the church, and the story would soon be told in such a way as to make the connexion clear. The attempt to obtain the merit and privileges attached to an unqualified surrender of property, without honestly performing the condition, was such a dangerous example to a society living in common, that Ananias and Sapphira would appear fully to deserve their heavy doom, and the narrator would feel interested in depicting it in the most fearful colours.

The release of the apostles from the common prison bears the appearance of fiction, from its being a perfectly useless miracle. It cannot be imagined that an angel, on releasing the apostles, would have the simplicity to send them to the temple, where they were so likely to be taken again, as we are told they were the next morning. The effect of the miracle is, that the apostles are not found where they had been left, but in another place. It is unworthy of the divine power to suppose that it would choose to display itself by such a mere hide-and-seek affair.

Now respecting the miracle of Paul's conversion:—The important point, that the men with Paul heard the voice, is contradicted in the speech attributed to Paul, Acts xxii. 9, for there he only says that they saw the light; "And they that were with me saw indeed the light, and were afraid; but they *heard not* the voice of him that spoke to me." In this place, as well as the above, Paul is told to go into Damascus, where he will be told what to do, and Ananias there gives him his apostolic commission; but in the speech before Agrippa, xxvii., Jesus gives him this commission at once from the sky. The story is told thus in the latter place, no doubt to avoid a repetition of the minute details; yet, strictly, the facts thus become at variance with the foregoing accounts, which shews at least carelessness in the manner of narrating. These inac-

curacies of Luke, in his own repetitions of his story, lead us to suspect that there may be some inaccuracies in his first story itself, and that he has represented as real what Paul himself only intended to relate as a vision, adding a few particulars which he found necessary to make the account complete. The recovery of Paul's sight, ver. 17, 18, might be related almost in the same words if understood of spiritual blindness. The light from heaven, and the remonstrance of Jesus, also require but little alteration to restore them to a merely spiritual sense. But as Luke was not with Paul at the time, the chief merit of his version of the matter may belong to Barnabas, who appears to have been the first who related the story, ix. 27, and that on an occasion when he had a sufficient motive to lead him to strain the real facts into an evident miraculous interposition, viz. his desire to prove to the church at Jerusalem that his friend Paul had been duly commissioned by Jesus himself, and might therefore properly be introduced by him as a fellow-labourer with the other apostles. The testimony of Barnabas was readily received concerning a matter so honourable to the church, and probably somewhat improved afterwards by Paul's other adherents, who were naturally anxious to meet the objection that their leader had not seen Jesus. And from one of these we have the present story.

The change in Paul's mind seems not unnatural. His first indignation against the innovating sect was appeased by the death of Stephen, and the subsequent persecution. On the road to Damascus he had leisure to reconsider their claims calmly. As a Jew, he himself expected the Messiah; and as a Pharisee, he believed the resurrection of the dead. Why, then, might it not be true that Jesus of Nazareth had been proved to be the Messiah by his resurrection from the dead? The disciples quoted many prophecies as fulfilled by Jesus, and he himself might remember others apparently accomplished by him. The idea once admitted, agitated him incessantly during the journey; he must decide for or against Jesus before reaching Damascus; and during a faintness occasioned by the heat of the sun at noonday, he thought he saw and heard

Jesus himself appealing to him. Upon a man of strong imagination and much given to visions, 2 Cor. xii. 1, it is not surprising that the impression made in such circumstances should be so strong as to influence his whole life. His energy of character permitted him to do nothing imperfectly. During the three years spent at Damascus and in

Arabia, from the materials afforded by the Jewish prophets, and by his own meditations and visions, he formed an improved system of Christianity; and, not contented merely to follow in the footsteps of the first disciples, he determined to proceed as a new and special apostle of the Christ or Messiah, to the conversion of the whole world.

ARTICLE X.—GENERAL OBJECTIONS TO THE POSSIBILITY OF A DIVINE REVELATION.

AMONG the ancient Greeks, the different provinces of religion and philosophy were kept up, without their interfering with each other, except occasionally in a slight degree. If in some of the more barbarous states the philosopher and the priest were joined, 'tis observable that the mysteries, whatever they were, which sprang from this strange union, were kept secret and undivulged. 'Twas enough of satisfaction to the priest-philosopher, if the initiated party preserved his respect and veneration for the tradition and worship of the temple, by complying in every particular with the requisite performances and rites of worship. Beyond this no account was taken of the philosophical faith of the worshipper. His opinions were left to himself, and he might philosophise according to what school or sect he thought fit. Even among the Jews, the Saducee (a Materialist and denier of the soul's immortality), was admitted as well as the Pharisee, who, from the schools of Pythagoras, Plato, and other latter philosophers of Greece, had learned to reason upon the immateriality and immortality of the soul. A strong spirit of toleration and latitudinarianism seems to have universally prevailed among the nations of antiquity.

But when the schools of the ancient philosophers came to decline and be dissolved, along with the religious systems that had existed cotemporaneous with them, and their teachers and priests became converts to the new system of Christianity, a great change for the worse appears to have taken place. Mysteries which, prior to this, had been

kept from the people, and treated with profound respect, were laid public to vulgar eyes, and endeavours made to render them understood. Those subjects upon which the greatest minds had differed, and been comprehended by none, were now enforced by terror, and urged with violence and intimidation, on the dullest capacities and comprehensions. Hence arose that furious spirit of bigotry which had been unknown before, in any species, form, or mixture of religion in the ancient world. That which formerly was the subject of profound speculation and inquiry, now became the necessary subject of a strict and absolute assent; and liberty of judgment and exposition entirely taken away. No ground was left for inquiry, search, or meditation, but everything reduced to article and proposition. Barbarous terms and idioms were daily introduced; monstrous definitions invented and imposed; new schemes of faith erected from time to time; and hostilities, the most rancorous manifested on all these occasions; so that the zeal, which man had previously shown in behalf of particular kinds of worship, from being *defensive* principally, grew now to be universally of the most *offensive* and repulsive character.

Hitherto it appears that persecution had not openly shown itself in the wide world. 'Twas sufficient security to any man, that he gave no disturbance to what was publicly established. But when bigotry and zeal came to be the ruling features of the new religion, the others which had existed long before, became to be possessed of the same

spirit, and in a manner to be aggressors in turn. The so called pagans, who witnessed the abusive and overbearing proceedings of the Christians, could no longer remain tolerant on their part; and they who had once exerted it over others, could expect no better quarter for themselves; so that nothing less than mutual extirpation became the aim, and almost open profession, of each religious society of those times. Hence the early persecutions which beset the Christian church.

At and before the time of the Roman Emperor, Julian, blood had been freely drawn, and cruelties exchanged, not only between Christian and heathen, but between Christian and Christian, after the most barbarous manner. What the zeal* and hatred of many of the early Christians towards the old heathen church, at that time the established one, was, may be understood by any person at all versed in the history of those days. The character of the times, and the proceedings of the Christians, are exceedingly well pourtrayed in the following epistle of Julian to the Bostrens.

"I should have thought, indeed, that the Galilean christian leaders would have esteemed themselves more indebted to me, than to him who preceded me in the administration of the empire. For in his time, many of them suffered exile, persecution, and imprisonment; multitudes of those whom in their religion they term heretics, were put to the sword. Inasmuch that in Samosata, Cyzicum, Paphlagonia, Bithynia, Galatia, and many other countries, whole towns were levelled with the earth. The just reverse of this has been observed in my time. The exiles have been recalled, and the proscribed restored to the lawful possession of their estates. But to that height of fury and distraction are this people arrived, that being no longer allowed the privilege to tyrannize over one another, or persecute either their own sectaries, or the religious of the lawful church, they swelled with rage, and leave no stone unturned, no opportunity unemployed, of raising tumult and sedition. So little regard have they for true piety, so little obedience to our laws and constitutions, however humane and tolerating. For still do we determine and steadily re-

solve, never to suffer one of them to be drawn involuntary to our altars. As for the mere people, indeed, they appear driven to these riots and seditions by those amongst them whom they call clerics; who are now enraged to find themselves restrained in the use of their former power and intemperate rule. They can no longer act the magistrate or civil judge, nor assume authority to make people's wills, supplant relations, possess themselves of other men's patrimonies, and by specious pretences transfer all into their own possession. For this reason I have thought fit, by this public edict, to forewarn the people of this sort, that they raise no more commotions, nor gather in a riotous manner about their seditious clerics, in defiance of the magistrate, who has been insulted, and in danger of being stoned by those incited rabbles."

Is it then to be wondered at, that the Roman emperors and magistrates, prior to christianity becoming the established religion, should look after its professors narrowly, and use them harshly, seeing that opposition to the government and the constituted authorities were inculcated as Christian duties.

The illiberal character of christianity was further developed as it acquired power under the *converted* Emperors; while to enable it to captivate the senses and the imagination, every necessary device was resorted to. The fathers knew how to turn to advantage the speculations of philosophy as well as the grosser ideas of vulgar ignorance; and also how to employ magnificence, edifices, ceremonies, processions, choirs, and paintings, and the other harmonies, to useful account, in their great design to enslave the judgment. Hence arose gorgeous temples, statues, rich vestments, copes, mitres, purple, and all the pomp of the cathedral ceremony. With these arms were subdued the victorious Goths; and an Attila* was

* When this victorious ravager was in full march to Rome, it is said, St. Leon (the then pope), went out to meet him in solemn pomp. The Goth was struck with the appearance, obeyed the priest, and retired instantly, with his whole army, in a panic of fear; alleging, as the reason, that among the rest of the pontifical train, he had seen one of an extraordinary form, who threatened

secured to their service when the Cæsars failed them.

Shews and ceremonies, and exhibition of chalices and candles, robes and dances, were looked upon in those days as the great evidences of devotion, and every attempt made to damage these things in the mind of the multitude, was met with signal and remorseless persecution. From these a hierarchy arose, which, in the process of time, had its powers concentrated under one head, and exercised over the minds and persons of a great portion of mankind, the most cruel and unrelenting despotism the race has ever been doomed to suffer. The history of Christianity is written in blood for fifteen hundred years; twelve hundred of which present a period of mental and moral depravity, and inaptitude, of the most appalling character. Throughout the vista we behold nothing but crosiers and mitres, bare-headed and bare-footed monks and priors. Bonfires of human bodies consumed for the glory of God. Racks, thumb-screws, gibbets, battle fields, sieges, assassinations, frauds, impostures, lies, villanies, robberies, and general spoliation; added to which the persecution of science, the discouragement of literature, the destruction of supposed witches, wizards, conjurors, magicians, &c., make up a picture of horrors to which no other part of human history can afford a parallel. Can these be evidences of divine inspiration? if so, then a malignant demon, and not a God of mercy, can alone be the author of that revelation, under which have arisen and flourished such atrocities as these. To a benevolently disposed mind, the murders and rapacities of those acting under the influence of the Christian system, are worth a thousand folios of musty evidences and arguments, that the Bible cannot be the work of a divine and merciful being.

But, in addition to this great reason against the possibility of divine revelation, which applies to all systems of religion in some degree, but more especially to the Christian system. We

death if he did not instantly retire. Of this important encounter, there are in St. Peter's Church, in the Vatican, and elsewhere at Rome, many fine sculptures, paintings, and representations made in honour of this affair,

shall proceed in a general manner to specify the unsatisfactory nature of *every other* kind of evidence adduced to give a superiority to this, over those systems of superstition which it supplanted, or now runs the race of competition against.

I. By what means are we to decide upon the scriptures which contain the *real will* of God, in contra-distinction to those which are apocryphal? Wherein can we establish the full from the unauthorised—the doubtful from the certain—the controverted from the uncontroverted—the *singly read* or that of *various readings*? How are we to be satisfied of the *true* copy of the *true* books, amidst the transcripts, copies, epistles, gospels, and holy mysteries of the numerous sects of the early Christian church? By what means can we trace the unadulterated progress of these true and unstained books, through the various phases of the church—through the hands of those in one age called orthodox, and in possession of power, and of those who, in another, overthrew their predecessors, and in their turn also assumed the guardianship of holy things? Great industry, and unceasing diligence, besides matchless honesty, must have been required for such an important service. Yet strange to say, we have not the least evidence of either industry or diligence to secure unalloyed this “divine revelation;” and as for honesty, we have the authority of their own historians, that the early fathers were a parcel of the most barefaced liars, knaves, and tradition-mongers that ever existed.* So remarkably upright, and such disinterested champions of fair play and free discussion were they, that of all the heresies which arose in these early times, or of all the objections which were urged by learned men to the truth of the Christian *scheme*, we have absolutely no record or monument left, *except* what themselves, (the dominant church party,) who were adversaries, have transmitted us. In the present day, we see how party spirit in religion and politics, leads to the perversion of facts and arguments for the sake of temporary advantage; and from this we may be led to estimate at their proper value the one sided statements of

* See Mosheim's Church History.

Origen, Eusebius, and others, respecting their opponents; more especially as we have this additional circumstance to assist us in our conclusion, that the orthodox party *burned or destroyed* the books of all their opponents, thus rendering themselves by this cowardly and disgraceful act, masters of the field for the time being. To suppose the Bible could pass through such hands unperverted and distorted, is to conceive that which is opposed to all experience and knowledge of human nature, especially of that human nature manufactured by superstition and priestcraft.

II. The Books themselves which are held up as the inspiration of Deity, are so mysterious and beclouded; so heightened with expressions, or covered with allegories and figures of rhetoric; so non-understandable in matter, or so involved in manner; that it is absurd to expect that men should agree about their truth. There are besides so many copies, that have been writ or passed through the hands of persons of different interests and persuasions; such different understandings and tempers; such distinct abilities and weaknesses, that it is no wonder there are so great a variety of readings; whole verses in one copy that are not in another; whole books admitted by one church or communion and rejected by another; and whole stories and relations admitted by some fathers and rejected by others. There have been also so many designs and views in expounding these writings, and so many senses in which they have been taught, that we are perfectly at a loss respecting what the books mean to convey. The "sacred volume" we are told is full of doctrines and obligations which it behoves us to know, yet such is the fabric and constitution of the whole, that there is no certain mark to determine whether the sense of particular passages should be taken as *literal* or *figurative*—spiritual or material. Very wise men, it is affirmed, even the early fathers, have expounded things allegorically when they should have expounded them literally. Others have given a *literal* meaning, when they should have understood allegorically. If the original lights erred thus far, how should we be exempted from like failure. If we follow any *one interpretation*, or any *one man's commentary*, what

rule or direction shall we have by which to judge that *one* is right? or is there any man that has translated *perfectly* or expounded *infallibly*? If we resolve to follow any one as far only as we like or fancy, we shall only then be right or wrong by *chance*; or if we resolve resolutely to follow any one whithersoever he leads, we shall probably come at last, where, if we have any eyes left, we shall see ourselves sufficiently ridiculous. Upon this slender tenure hangs the *probability* of this divine revelation. From the burning, suppressing, and interpolatory method so early in fashion, and so often tried on the gospels, epistles, comments, histories and writings of both orthodox and heretic, it is impossible to hazard or affirm any thing at all about the books; where they came from; or what credibility we should attach to them.

III. It is affirmed by Christians and especially by Roman Catholics, that the *living voice of the church* is assurance that the books now received, have ever been received within its pale without controversy, and that they have been preserved pure by a succession of God's ambassadors, appointed by Divine authority to protect the "sacred volume," and to watch over the interests of the church. In settling the truth of this statement a little evidence should accompany such a pompous assertion. Where resides the living, the infallible voice of the church? Surely not in the popes of Rome, or the cardinals' conclaves, who, judging from their past proceedings, have acted more like ambassadors of the devil than the emissaries of a benevolent God. Surely there can be no infallibility in that which was almost shaken to pieces by an obscure German monk some three hundred years ago, and which annually exhibits by its progressive diminution of power, that the years of dotage and decay have at last arrived. Does then the infallibility rest with the bishops of the English church; the general assembly of the kirk of Scotland, or any other of the hundred and one sects that range under the banners of Protestantism? Are these the archives in which has been preserved the "Holy Volume?" No; for, by the act of *Protestantism*, they gave up the infallibility of the church; they are but the mush-

rooms of a day besides the hoary-headed tripled, crowned deputy Christ on the banks of the Tiber. Title or charter from Christ, or his reputed father, can none of these parties, show in favour of this "living voice of the church," or that they or their predecessors were appointed infallible protectors of the "sacred volume" from corruption. They have no doubt legal charters, titles, coats of arms, colours, badges, &c., but these they have got through earthly powers, sovereigns, magistrates, and not from God. Supposing it certain that this succession of God's ambassadors is a truth, where shall we find the commission to have lain? How often dormant? How often divided even in one and the same species of claimants? Where are the letters patent? The CREDENTIALS? For these should in the nature of the thing be visible, and apparent? To this we are met by a babel of confusion. Catholic, episcopalian, presbyterian, methodist, ranter, jumper, muggletonian, mormonite, each pressing forward their respective systems as the only true religion; and themselves as the only true interpreters of God's word; until quarrelling, threatening, and fighting, are the ultimate standards of appeal resorted to, for the settlement of the question, by these amiable expounders of the Gospel.

This priestly competition is well illustrated by the following anecdote: A certain Indian in the train of an ambassador who visited this country some time ago, being engaged on Sunday in visiting our churches, happened to ask his interpreter, "Who the eminent persons were whom he observed haranguing so long, with such authority, from a high place." He was answered, "They are ambassadors from the Almighty, or (according to the Indian language) from the Sun." Whether the Indian took this seriously or in raillery did not appear. But having afterwards called in, as he went along at the chapels of some of the brother ambassadors of the Roman Catholic religion, and at some other Christian dissenting congregations, where matters as he perceived were transacted with greater privacy and inferior state; he

asked, "Whether these also were ambassadors from the same place?" He was answered, "that they had indeed been heretofore of the embassy, and had possession of the chief places he had seen; but they were now succeeded there by others." "If those, therefore, (replied the Indian) were ambassadors from the sun, these I take are from the moon." Were the Indian to go through the country now, and witness all the sects, great and small, he would think they were not only from the sun and moon, but from the stars also, they are so numerous. But so far are these contending ambassadors from producing their credentials of appointment, or proving their title from the original record, or court rolls of heaven, they deny us inspection or inquiry into those very records they plead; and refuse to submit their title to human judgment or examination.

We have now closed up this last loop of the priest, about a "living voice in the church," and the "ambassadors of Christ," who have formed the pure church by apostolical succession. Nothing now remains but for us to give a finishing argument, especially addressed to those who love figures of arithmetic better than figures of speech. This important argument will be presented in the shape of the expenses of the various Christian churches in Europe with other interesting particulars respecting their numbers, and enormous appropriation of other people's property. The expense of supporting such a scheme of superstition, is in itself sufficient proof that it is not of divine origin, unless we are profane enough to suppose that the Deity supports wholesale plunder and spoliation. As these calculations will take in nearly the whole of Europe, and be presented at considerable length, they will form the subject matter of the next number.

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FREE-THINKERS' INFORMATION FOR THE PEOPLE.

"LET ALL HAVE FULL LIBERTY TO TEACH AND MAINTAIN WHATEVER OPINIONS THEY MAY CHOOSE."—*Melancthon.*

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A REFUTATION OF THE SUPERNATURAL ORIGIN OF CHRISTIANITY.

ARTICLE XI.—THE EXPENSE OF THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION THROUGHOUT THE WORLD (*conclusion*).

In our last article, we grouped together a number of general objections to the possibility of a divine revelation, especially such a one as that contained in the bible. And now we proceed, as promised, to apply a finishing argument that will be understood by every one whose pockets are placed under embargo for the glory of God and the good of the church. In this article will be presented a very elaborate representation of the state of the Christian church throughout the world; the numbers attached to it in each of the principal countries of Europe, with the swarms of bishops, priests, and friars, both barefooted and shod, will be also given; conjoined with the enormous expenses attendant on the whole. From this some idea may be obtained of the great outlay which is attached to the trade of saving souls.

In the following article, an account is given of the number of the clergy, and the expense of supporting the ecclesiastical establishments in some of the principal countries of Europe. In the *Tableau de la Constitution Politique de la Monarchie Française selon la Charte, &c., par A. Mahull*, is the following account of the French clergy: "The Catholic clergy, before the revolution, were composed of 136 archbishops and bishops, 6800 canons and priests of the *bas choeurs*, attached to the cathedral and collegial churches, 44,000 curates, 6400 *succursalistes* (a sort of curates, removable by the bishops), 18,000 vicars, 16,000 ecclesiastics, with or without benefices, 600 canonesses, 31,000 monks, 27,000 nuns, 10,000 servants of the church; total, 159,936. The Catholic

population of France then comprised 25,000,000 souls. The clergy thus formed the hundred and sixty-eighth part of it. The possessions of the clergy then afforded, according to the statistical tables of M. César Moreau, 121,000,000 of the revenue. The French clergy, at the commencement of 1828, according to the documents collected by the editor of the *Almanach du Clergé*, comprised 5 cardinals, 14 archbishops, 66 bishops, 5 *cordons bleus*, of the order of the Holy Ghost, 468 vicars-general, 684 titular canons, 1788 honorary canons, 3083 curates, 22,475 *desservans* (who perform the duties of the titular clergy), 5705 vicars, 439 chaplains, 839 almoners, 1076 priests resident in the parishes, or authorized to preach or hear confession, 1044 priests, directors, and professors of seminaries. The number of priests deemed necessary by the bishops amounts to 52,457, which would give for the present population of France, excluding the Protestant sects, one for each 550 souls. The total number of officiating priests is 36,649. In 1824, the number was estimated at only 30,443. Consequently, 15,808 are required to complete the number desired by the heads of the church. It is estimated, that 13,493 of the priests employed are over sixty years of age, and that there are 2328 whom age and infirmity render incapable of acting. The number of ecclesiastical *clercs* is 44,244, of whom 9285 are *theologiens*, 3725 *philosophes*, 21,118 are in the seminaries, 7761 in the colleges, 2355 with the curates. The whole expense of supporting the Catholic worship, according to the calculation presented by M. Charles Dupin, June

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21, 1828, to the chamber of deputies, is 62,845,000 francs. Before the revolution, the possessions of the clergy afforded, as we have said, 121 millions, leaving a difference of expense in favour of the present system, of 58,155,000 francs, although the lower orders of the clergy receive much ampler compensation than before, and the clergy are much more equally distributed among those whom they are to serve. In 1828, according to the *Almanach du Clergé*, the whole number of nuns in France was 19,340. *De jure* or *de facto*, there exist 3024 establishments of the nuns, to wit, 1983 definitely authorized, and 1041 *en expectative*. There are but a small number of religious houses for males in France. The state of the clergy of Spain before the revolution is thus given in the *Diario de la Coruna* for July 1, 1821:—

Archbishops and bishops	62
Canons and dignitaries	2,399
Prebends	1,869
Parish rectors.....	16,481
Curates	4,927
Other beneficed clergy	16,400
Religious men of the greater orders	17,411
Religious men of the minor orders	9,088
Hermitands.....	1,416
Servants	3,987
Sacristans, church clerks	15,000
Monks.....	5,500
Friars with shoes	13,500
Friars without shoes	30,000
Regular congregationists	2,000
Servants of regulars	6,400
Youths in their houses	1,800

Total	148,242
Nuns and religious women	32,000

Total of regular and secular clergy	180,242
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Property belonging to the Clergy.

	Value.
Pious foundations for the use of both sexes, consisting in lands and buildings	£62,500,000
Estates of the secular clergy	62,000,000
Estates of the regular clergy	62,000,000
Real property, land, and buildings.....	£186,500,000

exclusive of tithes, and various other taxes and dues for the clergy. The population of Spain, in 1827, was estimated in Hassel's Historical and Statis-

tical Almanac, published in 1829, at 13,953,959. The number of places of worship may be 11,000. At the period of the Spanish revolution, the cortes, by a decree of October 24, 1821, introduced a new organisation of the Spanish church, abolishing all the monasteries, excepting ten or twelve, declaring all gifts and legacies to monasteries, churches, and hospitals unlawful, and curtailing the whole ecclesiastical establishment, so as to effect a saving of forty-four and a half millions of dollars annually to the nation, reckoning the annual expense of the church to the nation, before the revolution, at six per cent. on the church property. But the king, on his restoration to absolute power, October 1, 1823, immediately annulled all the decrees of the constitutional government, and the ecclesiastical establishment was placed on its former footing. The Spanish clergy, however, contribute considerably to the support of the government: Their contributions are as follow: 1. The *subsídio*, or voluntary gift of £100,000 annually; the *excusado*, or tithe, of the tenth house or farm, originally appropriated for building and repairing churches. Pope Pius V. allowed Philip II. to apply the produce of this tax to his wars against the infidels. It is now applied to the ordinary expenses of the state. The king has the choice of all the houses and farms, and selects the most valuable; so that this tenth may be considered equivalent to one-eighth or one-seventh of all the tithes of the parish. 2. The *tercias reales* is a tax of two-ninths of the tithes received by the clergy. 3. The *noveno*, another ninth part of the tithes annually paid to the clergy. 4. The *novales*, tithes on land newly brought into cultivation. 5. The *díezmos extentos*, the tithe of all lands originally exempted from clerical jurisdiction. The whole of the above taxes are farmed. These, however, are not the only burdens imposed on the clergy. It has for some time been the practice to oblige them to pay two years' revenue upon their appointment to a new benefice. The payment is made during a period of four years, being the half of each year's income; and, on the expiration of this term, the incumbent is sometimes removed to another living, to undergo the same depletory operation

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during another four years. In consequence of this policy, the Spanish clergy, formerly so wealthy, are now, in many cases, but differently provided for, and are daily becoming of less consequence in the estimation of the people as well as of the government. Many of the great dignitaries, however, are very rich. Next to the ecclesiastical principalities of Germany, the richest Catholic prelates are found in Spain. The archbishoprics of Toledo, Seville, Santiago, Valencia, and Saragossa have larger revenues than any in France, or any other country. Some of the bishops and other dignitaries, also, have very considerable incomes. The bishop of Murcia receives annually about £20,833 sterling, and the bishop of Lerida £10,000. The possessions of some of the monasteries, particularly some of the Carthusians and Ieronymites, include the greatest part of the district in which they are situated. These religious foundations, while they depopulate and impoverish the neighbouring country, increase poverty and idleness by indiscriminate charity.

Latin Catholic Church in Hungary.

Hearers	4,000,000
Places of worship	3,230
Average number of persons to a place of worship	1,240
Clergymen	5,469
3 archbishops, 18 bishops, 16 titular bishops, 274 prebendaries and canons, 5158 working clergy	
Average number of clergymen to a place of worship	1½
or 5 clergymen to 3 places of worship	
Average number of clergymen to 1000 persons	1½
Income	£314,214

37 archbishops and bishops ..	96,000
374 prebends and canons.....	53,000

£154,000

5158 working clergy, averaging £33 each	£170,214
4,000,000 of hearers, at £80,000 per million of hearers	£320,000

This is, perhaps, the greatest instance on the continent of Europe of the abuse of the church property; 311 comparatively idle churchmen possess themselves of nearly as much income as 5,158 working clergymen, who, with

scanty means of existence, labour in the ministry, and are the real spiritual pastors of the people. The richest benefices are considered a provision for members of the great families of Hungary. Any benefice producing more than £3400 a-year, pays the surplus to the fund of the working clergy.

Calvinistic Church of Hungary.

Hearers.....	1,050,000
Places of worship	1,351
Clergymen	1,384
One place of worship for every 750 people.	
One clergyman for every place of worship.	
Income—1383 clergymen, average £44 each	
	£60,896
1,050,000 hearers, at £60,000 per million of hearers	£63,000

Lutheran Church of Hungary.

Hearers.....	650,000
Places of worship	448
Clergymen	456
One place of worship for every 1500 persons	
One clergyman for every place of worship.	
Income	£25,080

Highest stipend, £80—average, £55 for 456 persons

650,000 hearers, at £40,000 per million of hearers.....	£26,000
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Estimated Expenditure on the Clergy in Italy.

Hearers	19,391,200
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The Italians are all Roman Catholics. According to a publication called *Prospetto geografico statistico degli Stati Europei*, printed at Milan, 1820, they are distributed as follows:—

Kingdom of Sardinia, (of which the island 520,900)	3,935,000
Lombardo-Venetian Kingdom, subject to Austria.....	4,117,000
Duchy of Parma	390,000
Duchy of Modena (Reggio and Mirandola)	350,000
Duchy of Massa and Carrara..	30,000
Duchy of Lucca	127,000
Grand duchy of Tuscany	1,198,000
States of the Church	2,430,000
Republic of San Marino	7,000
Kingdom of the Two Sicilies, or Naples (Of which the island of Sicily, 1,660,000).....	7,576,000

19,391,200

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Malta, 104,600

Corsica, 180,000

284,000 Italians, but detached
from Italy

Places of worship 16,170

Clergymen..... 20,400

Estimated at one working clergyman
for every 1000 persons (being more than
in France, and less than in Spain,) and
1000 dignitaries, as follows:—

1 pope,

46 cardinals,

38 archbishops, } Estimated at one

32 bishops, } prelate for every

853 other dignitaries,

19,400 working clergymen.

20,400

One clergyman for every 950 persons.

One place of worship for every 1200 persons,

Income £776,000

Being at the rate of £40,000 per million of
hearers.

19,391,200 hearers, at £40,000

per million of heares..... £776,000

This table is taken from Remarks on
the Consumption of the public Wealth,
by the Clergy of every Nation, &c.
(London, 1822), and is said to have
been framed with the assistance of a
gentleman who had resided a consider-
able time in the great cities of Italy,
particularly in Rome, and had given
much attention to the subject.

The following statements respecting
Russia are taken from the *Statistique
et Itineraire de la Russie, par J. H.
Schnitzler*, Paris and St. Petersburg,
1829. The population is estimated at
55,000,000. The clergy of Russia may
be estimated at 230,000 individuals in
actual service, of whom the cities com-
prise about 60,000; over 190,000 belong
to the orthodox Greek church, inclusive
of the lay brothers, the choristers, &c.;
the Catholic clergy amount to more
than 30,000; the Protestant clergy do
not exceed 1000, and there are over 9000
Mollahs. These are all allowed to
marry, except the Catholics. Nearly
200,000 are fathers of families, and the
total number of persons connected with
the clergy may be computed at 900,000.
Their condition differs according to
their rank; the metropolitans, the
archbishops, bishops, and the archiman-
drites are rich; but the great mass of

the clergy is poorly provided for. The
monks are numerous, and are supported
at the expense of the state; but their
wants are few, and their manner of
living extremely simple. The secular
clergy, which is under the superintend-
ence of the bishops, is divided into
protohiereis or archpriests, *hiereis* or
priests (popes), and deacons. The re-
gular clergy, which is also called the
black clergy (*tehornoe doukhovenstro*)
comprises the archimandrites, the *igou-
menoi* or priors, the *igoumenai* or ab-
besses, the monks (*monachi*), and nuns
(*monachini*), and the hermits (*pous-
tynniki*). The bishops are taken from
the regular clergy, and any priest, who
desires to remain attached to the ec-
clesiastical order after the death of his
wife, must enter that body, and is then
called a *hieromonk*. The revenues of
the clergy consisted originally of tithes;
but, after it had come into possession
of large landed estates, cultivated by
boors, its support was derived partly
from their produce, and partly from the
raskol-nitchii-prikaze, or tax paid by
dissidents for the privilege of wearing
the beard. The management of the
revenues was in the hands of the pa-
triarch, until Catharine I. established a
commission for the purpose, which was,
however, suppressed in 1742. The holy
synod was then intrusted with their ad-
ministration; and it appears, from an
enumeration made by order of the
empress Elizabeth, in 1746, that 839,546
male boors were attached to the estates
of the clergy. These estates were secu-
larized by Peter III. in 1762, who ap-
pointed a new commission for their
management. Catharine II. began by
abolishing this board, and improving
the condition of the clergy. In 1764,
she secularized all the ecclesiastical
possessions, re-established the commis-
sion, and assigned a fixed revenue to
the members of the clergy. The cham-
bers of account, in the capitals of the
governments, are now invested with the
administration of these estates, the
annual revenue of which is estimated at
250,000 silver rubles, which is expended
in paying the salaries of the clergy.
Notwithstanding this seizure of their
domains, the clergy have still a con-
siderable amount of land connected with
the convents, or with the church, but
there are no boors attached.

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Church or Kirk of Scotland.

The established religion in Scotland is the Presbyterian or Calvinistic sect, and is denominated the *kirk* of Scotland.

Hearers 1,500,000

According to Sir John Sinclair, in 1814, there were in Scotland,

Hearers of the established Presbyterian church.....	1,407,524
Dissenting Presbyterians.....	256,000
Baptists, Bereans, Glassites....	50,000
Scottish Episcopalians	28,000
Church of England	4,000
Roman Catholics	50,000
Methodists.....	9,000
Quakers	300
Total	1,801,824

Places of Worship	1,000
One place of worship for every 1,500 persons.	
Clergymen.....	1,000
Average number of clergymen for a place of worship.....	1
Average number of clergymen for 1500 persons	1
Income	£206,360

Being an average of £220 for 938 clergymen. Their stipend can in no case be under £150; it averages much more; and then they are provided with a manse, or dwelling-house, and a glebe of land.

1,500,000 hearers, at £135,000 per million hearers £202,500

The revenue of the Scottish clergy, according to the *Remarks*, is derived from a charge on the rents of land, paid by the landlord throughout Scotland. It is a moderate charge, amounting to about ninepence sterling an acre on lands in cultivation, and, although it is called *teinds*, or tithe, does not amount nearly to the tithe in England. An estate in Scotland pays £30 on 800 statute English acres, while the same sum of £30 is in some cases paid by an estate of eighty acres in England.

The Average number of People for whom there is a Church.

In France	1,150
In Scotland	1,500
In Spain	1,000
In Portugal	1,000
In Hungary, Catholics	1,240
In do. Calvinists	750
In do. Lutherans	1,500

The Average Number of Persons for whom there is a Clergyman provided.

In France	1,150
In Scotland	1,500
In Spain	700
In Portugal	700
In Hungary, Catholics	730
In do. Calvinists	750
In do. Lutherans	1,500

There are in France about 9000 clergymen generally engaged in tuition, who have not employments in the church, but who render occasional and regular aid to the ministers of the churches; they are the remnants of the times before the revolution; their number is diminishing fast, and is not renewed. Taking these into consideration, there is in France one clergyman for every 830 persons.

The following estimates are taken from the *Remarks* above quoted, as are also the preceding respecting Scotland, &c.

Estimated Expenditure on the Clergy of the Established Church of England.

IN ENGLAND AND WALES.

Hearers 6,000,000

The whole population is 12,000,000; if one half are hearers of the establishment, it is certainly the outside.

Places of Worship	11,743
Clergymen	18,000
Archbishops	2
Bishops.....	24
Archdeacons.....	60
Deans	27
Canons and prebends	544

Dignitaries	657
Working clergy, rectors, vicars, curates, and chaplains	17,343
One place of worship for every 500 hearers.	
One clergyman for every 333 hearers.	
One archbishop for every 3,000,000 hearers.	
One prelate for every 23,000 hearers.	
Income	£7,600,000
6,000,000 of hearers at £1,266,000 per million	7,596,000

Estimated Expenditure on the Clergy of the Established Church of England and Ireland.

IN IRELAND.

Hearers	400,000
According to the population return, there are in Ireland 6,346,000 people, say.....	7,000,000

The following is deemed their distribution into sects:—

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Roman Catholics.....	5,500,000
Presbyterians	800,000
Church of England and Ireland	400,000
Methodists and other sects....	300,000
Places of worship	740
Clergymen	1,700
Archbishops.....	2
Bishops	18
Deans	33
Archdeacons	34
Canons, prebends, &c.	500
Dignitaries	587
Working clergy	1,113

(For full particulars, see *Ecclesiastical Register*, printed by Nolan, Dublin.)

One place of worship for every 540 hearers.	
One clergyman for every 235 hearers.	
One archbishop for every 200,000 hearers.	
One prelate for every 28,000 hearers.	
Income.....	£1,300,000
400,000 hearers, at £3,250,000	
per million of hearers.....	£1,300,000

Estimated Expenditure on their own Clergy, by the People who are not hearers of the Established Church.

IN ENGLAND AND WALES.

Hearers	6,000,000
Places of worship	8,000
Clergymen	3,000
One place of worship to 750 hearers,	
One clergyman to 750 hearers.	
Income.....	£500,000

Voluntary contributions, at an average rate of £65 for each clergyman.

6,000,000 of hearers, at £85,000	
per million	510,000

Estimated Expenditure on the Clergy of that Part of the People whose Ministers do not receive Stipends from the Kirk.

IN SCOTLAND.

Hearers	500,000
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(See the numbers of each sect in the table of the Scottish kirk.)

Places of worship	333
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At an average of one place of worship for every 1500 persons, as in the kirk.

Clergymen	400
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At an average of six clergymen to five places of worship.

Income.....	£44,000
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Voluntary contributions at an average of £110 each, to 400 clergymen.

A place of worship to every 1500 hearers.	
A clergyman to every 1250 hearers.	

500,000 hearers, at £90,000 per million	£45,000
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Estimated Expenditure on their own Clergy, by the people of Ireland who are not of the Established Church.

Hearers	6,600,000
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Computed as follows:—

Catholics	5,500,000
Presbyterians	800,000
Methodists, and other sects....	300,000
Places of worship	2,378
Clergymen	2,378
One place of worship for every 2400 hearers.	
One clergyman for every 2400 hearers.	
Income.....	£261,580

Voluntary contribution, at an average of £110 each, for 2378 clergymen.

6,600,000 hearers, at £40,000	
per million of hearers.....	£264,000

Government grant, yearly, the sum of £13,487 to certain Protestant ministers, viz., to Presbyterians, £8,697; to seceding Presbyterians, £4,034; to other Protestant dissenting ministers, £756.

To these tables succeed, in the Remarks above mentioned, comparative tables, showing in one view the expense of supporting the ecclesiastical establishments in all the countries of Europe and America. These latter, it must be recollected, were drawn up during the short sway of the constitutional governments in Spain and Portugal, when the expense of the church in these countries was greatly reduced. The following comparison, therefore, is true only of that time:—

Christians throughout the World.

Roman Catholics. Protestants. Greek Church			
In Great Britain and Ireland	5,800,000	15,200,000	
In all the rest of the world	118,872,000	38,856,000	41,500,000
Total	124,672,000	54,056,000	41,500,000
Catholics	124,672,000	Pay to Clergy	£6,106,000
Protestants	54,056,000	"	11,996,000
Greek Church	41,500,000	"	760,000

Total of Christians	220,228,000	"	£18,772,000
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Of which England, for twenty-one millions, pays more than half (as things then stood.)

It would appear that the holy trades' unions, ordinarily denominated church establishments, have been very successful in keeping up the rate of wages; and that even the irregular journey-men, the knobsticks, or dissenting parsons, have managed to make a snug

thing of it, notwithstanding the want of combination among them. Great must have been the ignorance and gullibility of our forefathers to have allowed such immense clerical corporations to spring up; and ill starred must be the unhappy country that is fairly placed under the influence of these priestly sharks. France was eaten up by them prior to the revolution. They were like the locust of Egypt upon every goodly place, tainting with a deadly murrain every thing useful and ennobling, warring with science, persecuting literature, visiting with imprisonment and death the free inquirer, and joining hands with kingcraft and landcraft in plundering the people. No country was so much scourged with the moral pestilence as Spain, up to the revolution of 1822. The tables previously given, show how the black leeches gorged themselves with the blood of that nation. Fortunately for the people of Spain, the present government is disposed to limit the number of these clerical vermin, and to restrain their destructive ravages. What France and Spain have been, this country now is. The tables in reference to the Church of England are a national disgrace. *Nine millions of the national wealth* for the salvation of souls, according to the Canterbury formula. Nine millions of money, the greater part of which is paid to lazy luxurious bishops, the younger

scions of the aristocracy, or to deans, chapters, deacons, vicars, rectors, &c., &c., most of whom are non-resident, fox-hunting, dissipated, immoral, and unprincipled characters, who would sell Jesus Christ and his apostles, and give the Holy Ghost into the bargain, if it would but increase their livings, and strengthen their power over the people. And this expense is for only a portion of the public, and that a small one; for the Church-goers from sympathy with its doctrines are but few, compared with those that make the state creed a cloak to serve their selfish interests and political purposes; and the whole are but a minority of the nation. If we add to the expense of the ecclesiastical establishment, the sums paid to the dissenting priesthood of all denominations in this country, with the collections of Bible, Tract, and Missionary Societies, and also the outlay for the propagation of the gospel in foreign parts, by means of the fire and sword, (for the present Chinese war is considered by many of the saints as an instrument of Providence towards the introduction of the gospel into China,) if we add all these items together, the expense of this divine revelation is enormous. So enormous, indeed, that none but knaves or fools can believe that such a system of downright robbery and fraud can be an emanation from divine wisdom and perfection.

THE low rank in which Paul places miracles appears inconsistent with the supposition that those of which he speaks were real and indisputable ones. A manifest suspension of the laws of nature must be one of the most impressive events that could happen to men of any age or country; and persons commissioned to command or declare such suspensions from time to time could hardly fail to be regarded, in any society, with the highest degree of reverence ever paid to men; yet Paul speaks of the Corinthian miracle-workers in this depreciating manner,—“thirdly, teachers; *after that, miracles,*” &c. The only explanation seems to be, that he knew that the performances in question were far from being clear miracles, and would not bear to have much stress laid upon them.

Hence, although he himself did not wholly reject the pretensions in question, and was willing that they should contribute as far as they might to the service of the church, he urges the Corinthians to seek after gifts, which he was conscious might be claimed with less danger of discredit.

It appears that Paul's claims to the apostleship were resisted by a strong party, although, according to his own account, he had wrought all the signs of an apostle, including wonders and mighty deeds. Yet in 2 Cor. xi. xii., where he asserts his claim to be considered one of the chiefest apostles most forcibly, he makes very little use of his miracles; and when speaking even of his adventures at Damascus, does not mention the miracle of his conversion, which would have supplied

a very pertinent argument. The twelfth verse 2 Cor. xii. is added, when he appears to have nearly concluded the subject.

Upon the whole, the notices of the miracles found in the apostolic writings are too scanty to agree with the reality of such numerous and striking miracles as are recorded in the Gospels and the Acts. Such miracles, whilst yet in the eyes and ears of men, must have formed a constant topic of discourse; and, although much of the Epistles is argumentative and hortatory, we should have expected that some allusions to the miraculous as well as to the ordinary occurrences within the knowledge of the persons addressed, would have found they way into them.

The lower classes in every age and country, owing to their less acquaintance with physical science, are disposed to see special interventions in ordinary events, and receive readily miraculous tales when brought to them; but about the time of Christ, even grave historians, both Greek and Roman, admitted such tales into their most finished compositions. Amongst the Jews, especially, the national temper, creed, and low degree of scientific attainments, promoted the taste for the miraculous; consequently, their accomplished historian Josephus, although obviously checked by his fear of Greek and Roman criticism, and without any other apparent motive than a pure love of the marvellous, could not resist the temptation of introducing abundance of miraculous stories. The historians of the early reformed Jewish, or Christian, churches, were inferior to Josephus in education and literary attainments, wrote under stronger excitement, had in view the interest and honour of their own newly risen sect, and apparently intended their works for the use of their brethren, who were influenced by the same feelings and opinions as themselves. It was to be expected, then, that these histories should contain a larger proportion of the miraculous than that of Josephus. And as it would be thought very harsh to condemn Josephus as totally unworthy of credit, and to throw aside his history because he partook somewhat of a vice peculiar to his age

and country, so may we also look indulgently upon the inaccuracy or erredulity of the evangelic historians,—venerate their compositions as the chief remaining records of the rise of that intrepid sect which has revolutionized the moral world,—admire the highly wrought feelings and imagination which could enliven Patmos with a glimpse of the kingdom eternal in the heavens, refreshing the common-places of the world with visions unspeakable, and with angels ascending and descending amongst the sons of men,—and respecting even their recognized fictions as being not attempts at gross fraud and imposture, but the aberrations of zeal for an honourable cause, or as exhibiting that tinge of romance which times and events of interest almost unparalleled in history had disposed the minds of men to infuse into the realities of life.

NOTICE.

Our readers are informed that the next number will commence a series of articles on the gods, devils, and supernatural machinery of all the religions of the world—Heathen, Pagan, and Christian. The articles will be illustrated by beautiful engravings or portraits of the various gods, devils, and supernatural characters of these religions, with their accompanying symbols and emblems. The next three numbers will be on BRAMAH, VISHNU, and SIVA, the three principal gods of the Hindoos. The articles illustrated by THREE FINE FIGURES OF THESE OLD DIVINITIES. These will be followed, in each successive number, by splendid representations of the ten Avatars, or incarnations of Vishnu. As the expense of the engravings will be very considerable, it is hoped the increased circulation will make up for the extra outlay for illustrations.

For the satisfaction of many who wish to know when the volume will be completed, we beg leave to state that it will be at the end of the year—Christmas.

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PRICE 1d.

THE WORLD'S PANTHEON; OR, THE PICTURE GALLERY OF SUPERSTITION.

NO. I.—EXPLANATION OF THE GODS, AND SUPERNATURAL MACHINERY OF THE
HINDOO RELIGION—*Brahma.*



BRAHMA—the first person of the Hindoo Trinity.

THAT mysterious and frequently impenetrable gloom in which Fable and Superstition have united to veil the earthly periods of the history of all nations, in a peculiar manner clouds the annals of ANCIENT INDIA. The affectionate gratitude or abject servility of mankind in exalting to the rank of deities their first legislators and most distinguished heroes, has been the source of those innumerable difficulties

which, on his very outset, have never failed to assail the historian, and have been so uniformly complained of by those of every age and of every region.

In tracing back, through remote ages, the annals of those nations which inhabit the more polished regions of Europe, where public records are preserved with scrupulous fidelity, and are constantly open to the inspection of

literary curiosity, if the task of the historian be arduous, and his path perplexed; what must be the additional labour and perplexity of him who strives to pierce the tenfold obscurity of ancient Oriental records, involved as they are in the mazes of fiction, and buried deep in the bosom of mythology?

A period of many millions of years, according to the Hindoo historians, has elapsed since the almighty fiat produced CREATION. Of that magnificent event, we are informed, in the Ayeen Akbery,* that there are no less than eighteen different opinions prevailing in Hindostan.

From the more genuine sources of information which they have discovered, and principally from Sir William Jones, we shall now proceed to exhibit, in as concise a manner as may be consistent with perspicuity, the real sentiments entertained by the natives of Hindostan, as they stand recorded in their own most venerated books, concerning the creation of the universe, and the formation of its various inhabitants.

For the better comprehension of this extraordinary system, it is necessary to remind the reader that, according to their extensive conceptions, the earth we inhabit is but one of numerous regions intended for the transmigration of spirits, or Devatas, who have fallen from their original rectitude, and who are doomed successively to ascend from the lowest sphere of punishment and purgation to the most exalted mansion of purification and perfection. Upon this basis the whole system of that theology, which is so intimately blended with their earliest history, rests, and a proper attention to this circumstance will serve as a perpetual clue to guide us through the most obscure and intricate avenues of that vast labyrinth. We shall cease to deride the extravagant benevolence which erects hospitals for aged goats and cows, and which prepares luxurious banquets of sugar and rice for the humble progeny of ants and flies; and we shall forbear to condemn, as rashness and insanity, the pious zeal which cherishes beneath an human roof the brood of venomous snakes and noxious vermin.†

* See Ayeen Akbery, Vol. III., p. 6.

† Ovington's Voyage to Surat, p. 298. To

The following is the substance of a passage descriptive of this grand event, which was literally translated by Sir W. Jones from the beginning of the Manava Sastra, in which MENU, the son of Brahma, addresses the sages who consulted him upon the subject of the formation of the universe. MENU informs his inquirers, "that this world was all darkness undiscernible, undistinguishable, altogether as in a profound sleep: till the self-existent invisible God, making it manifest with five elements, and other glorious forms, perfectly dispelled the gloom. Desiring to raise up creatures by an emanation from his own essence, he first created the waters, and impressed them with the power of motion: by that power was produced a golden egg, blazing like a thousand stars, in which was born BRAHMA, the great parent of all rational beings, THAT WHICH is, the invisible cause, self-existing, but unperceived! That divinity having dwelt in the egg through revolving years, HIMSELF meditating upon HIMSELF, divided it into two equal parts: and from those halves he formed the heavens and the earth, placing in the midst the subtle æther, the eight points of the world, and the permanent receptacle of waters."*

Of the various systems of the cosmogony, according to the Hindoo writers, scarcely any one has been hitherto exhibited to the public in all the various accounts from India, which does not mention the importance of the egg in the production of creation. In the Ayeen Akbery, the conjunction of Brahma and Terce is said to have produced an egg, which Mahadeo divided into two parts: of one half the Dewtahs, or all celestial beings, were formed; of the remaining half, all terrestrial beings.

the instance which this author relates of the secretary of the brokers at Surat feeding a large snake, which daily came into his house, with bread and milk, on the idea that it was tenanted by the soul of his deceased father, may be added another, given by a more recent writer, who informs us, that, in 1761, ABDoola KHAN, one of the Rohilla princes, having taken the habit of a Fakeer, expired by the bite of a snake, which he affected in a similar manner to cherish. See History of the Rohilla Afghans, p. 160.

* Asiatic Researches, Vol. I., p. 245.

The idea of the golden sphere above mentioned, probably took its rise from the same source; and even the great triple divinity, Brahma, Veeshnu, and Seeva, are in other Hindoo treatises of the cosmogony said to have been formed from three eggs, dropped from the womb of Bhavani, the first created woman, and consort of Seeva, the last person in the divine triad. It is Eusebius, in the third chapter of his Evangelical Preparation, who acquaints us that the Egyptians considered an egg as the apt symbol of the world, and from them this doctrine, together with many Eastern superstitions, was by Orpheus, in succeeding ages, introduced into Greece. Hence the *ῶν Ὀρφικόν* became a subject of great celebrity among both poets and philosophers.

This doctrine of the primeval egg, however, was neither peculiar to the Egyptians, nor to the Indians, for the Phœnicians believed their Zophasemin,* or the heavenly intelligences, which were the objects of their adoration, to be *oviform*, and according to Plutarch,† worshipped an egg in the orgia of Bacchus, as an image of the world. In the same traditionary opinion that the world was made from an egg, or at least bore a great resemblance to it, many other nations of the ancient world coincided, and they supported the propriety of the allegory, not only from the perfection of its external form, but fancifully extended the allusion even to its internal composition; comparing the pure white shell to the fair expanse of heaven; the fluid transparent white to the circumambient air; and the more solid yolk to the central earth.

As Brahma, the first person in the Hindoo triad of deity, was produced from an egg, so it is not a little remarkable that the very same kind of origin, in the hymns attributed to Orpheus, is allotted to the first-born deity, denominated Phanes‡ by the Greeks; and it should not be forgotten, that, in the Orphic mysteries, the egg was con-

sidered as the emblem of generation and fecundity; whence it probably arose that the egg was also of principal importance in the sacrifices to Cybele, the fruitful *mother* of the gods.

Aristophanes has a passage in which he is thought, under a comic veil, to have given the true system of this ancient cosmogony. He describes all as one vast chaos,* unlimited and profound, over which darkness, brooding with sable wings, deposited the first egg of wind in the ample bosom of Erebus, whence, in process of time, with the force of an impetuous whirlwind, issued AMIABLE LOVE, resplendent with wings of gold, which mingling in embrace with the turbid chaos, engendered men and animals, and produced the earth, the heavens, and even the immortal gods. This notion of creation appears to have passed from India into Egypt, and from thence incorporated into the Grecian mythology.

We are informed in the Indian Sastra, that AFFECTION (by which is doubtless meant the *Epos* of the Greek philosophers) dwelt with God from all eternity. It was of three different kinds; the creative, the preserving, and the destructive; in other words, it was displayed in the agency of Brahma, Veeshnu, and Seeva. "The affection of God produced Power, and Power, at a proper conjunction of Time and Fate, embraced Goodness, and generated Matter."

"From the opposite actions of the creative and destructive qualities in matter self-motion first arose. These discordant actions produced the Akass,† which invisible element possessed the quality of conveying sound; it produced air, a palpable element; fire, a visible element; water, a fluid element; and earth, a solid element. The Akass dispersed itself abroad. Air formed the atmosphere; fire, collecting itself, blazed forth in the host of heaven; water rose to the surface of the earth, being forced from beneath by the gravity of the latter element. Thus broke

* Zophasemin is derived by Bochart from the Hebrew word *Tsope*, signifying spectators, observers; and Samajim, heaven.

† Vide Plut. in Sympos. lib. 3. quæst. 3., et Macrobi. Sat. lib. 7, c. 16.

‡ By Phanes the Greeks meant the sun, so called *απὸ τοῦ φαίνειν*.

* Aristophanes in *Avibus*, v. 697.

+ The Akass is in Indian books explained to be a kind of celestial element, pure, impalpable, and unresisting, in which the planets move, and seems to be of kindred with the doctrine of air rarified into æther, maintained by the Stoic philosophers.

forth the world from the veil of darkness in which it was formerly comprehended. Order rose over the universe. The seven heavens were formed, and the seven worlds were fixed in their places; there to remain till the great dissolution, when all things shall be absorbed into God."

In the manuscript translation of a very curious PURANA on the Indian cosmogony, by Mr. Halhed, now deposited in the British Museum, the order, by which the Deity proceeded in the production of all created objects, is somewhat varied. In this authentic Sanscreeet treatise, the "independent Spirit, whose essence is eternal, sole, and self-existent," is represented as, in the first place, giving birth to a certain pure æthereal light,—“a light, not perceptible to the elementary sense, but extracted from the all-comprehensive essence of his own perfections.” The Deity then assuming a form apparently, but not really, masculine, for the Deity is properly of no sex, caused to emanate from himself “an immeasurable torrent of water,” and he preserved it suspended by his almighty power. By the same prolific energy, eggs without number, bearing the shape of the primordial matter, were generated, and floated upon that mighty abyss. From these eggs, denominated in Sanscreeet BRAHMANDEL, that is the coverings and integuments of the various objects of which the universe is composed, Brahma, Veeshnu, and Seeva, and all the train of celestial beings, sprang first into existence. Brahma is described to be of a black, Veeshnu of a red, and Seeva of a white complexion. The eight spheres, the residence of created beings, are then successively formed by Brahma, invested with the almighty power; and the creation is complete.

In another part of the Indian Sastra, before cited, Brahma, having at the command of God created the world, is represented as lost in amazement at the wonders of his own creation, and trembling for its safety, exclaims, “O immortal Brahm! who shall preserve from destruction those things which we behold?” Immediately, we are informed, a spirit of a blue colour issued from his mouth, who was Bishen, the preserver, or, in other words, Veeshnu, and exclaimed aloud, I WILL.

After the human beings were created, the process is thus given by the Pundects, in the Preface to the Code of the Gentoo Laws. These venerable sages, when assembled at Calcutta, in 1775, at the express desire of the Governor General, to compose, from authentic Sanscreeet documents, a system of laws for the future government of Bengal, in which is included a considerable share of that theological policy which, springing throughout from the same source, is inseparably blended with their jurisprudence, have thus accounted for the first origin of man. They assert that the Principle of Truth, after having formed the earth, the heavens, the water, the fire, and the air, produced a being called BRAHMA, the Dewtah, for the creation of all beings: afterwards he created the BRAHMIN from his mouth, the KHETREE from his arms, the BICE from his thighs, and the SOODER from his feet. BRAHME, as we have before observed, is a Sanscreeet word used in the neuter gender, and signifying THE GREAT ONE.* Birmah or Brahmah is the masculine derivative, and is the genitive case of Brahme. Europeans have expressed the word variously, but in the Vedas only Birmah and Brahma occur. Brahme then is the supreme God; Brahma is that mighty Spirit who first emanated from the eternal essence, and by whose immediate agency the world was made; the awful promulger of the sacred Vedas.

The Brahmin, eldest born, and most favoured of Brahma, was created from his mouth, which implies the superior wisdom and eminence by which this cast was distinguished. The duty prescribed the Brahmin is to read, to pray, and to instruct. From his arms Brahma created the Khetree, or Katteri, enduing the latter with STRENGTH, as the former with wisdom, the office of the Katteri is therefore to draw the bow, to fight, and to govern. From his belly and thighs he produced the tribe of Bice, whose function in society is to procure NOURISHMENT, and to provide the ne-

* See the words Brahme and Brahma particularly explained in the Asiatic Research. Vol. I., p. 242. See also Holwell, part, 2, p. 7: and Dow's Prefatory Dissertation, Vol. I., p. 41.

cessaries of life, by the honourable occupation of agriculture, and by the lucrative pursuits of commerce. From his feet sprang the tribe of Sooder, whose duty is SUBJECTION, to labour, to serve, to travel. A fifth adventitious tribe called BURRUN SUNKER was afterwards produced, and of this tribe the race of mechanics and petty dealers, who are esteemed of less account, as administering rather to the luxuries than to the necessities of life, are composed; forming as many separate casts as there are trades or occupations to be exercised by its members.

Before we proceed farther in the account, it is necessary that we should have an accurate conception of the CHRONOLOGY of the Hindoos; if the term *accurate* may be applied to the conception of things bordering upon infinity. According to their ideas, the age of the world is divided into four grand periods, of astonishing duration, which they call YUGS, or distinct ages. The first is the SATYA YUG, that is, the age of *purity*. The Satya Yug is said to have lasted 3,200,000 years, and the Hindoos affirm that the life of man, during that period, was extended to 100,000 years, and that his stature was twenty-one cubits. The second is called the TRETA YUG, that is, the age in which one third part of mankind became reprobate. Treta is a Sanscreeet word, signifying *three*, which affords us a clue for unravelling the whole mystery of these amazing periods, as descriptive of the several stages of purity and vice, which distinguished mankind in the vast and successive aras of their fancied existence. The Treta Yug they suppose to have consisted of 2,400,000 years, and that men in this period lived to the age of 10,000 years. The third is styled the DWAPAR YUG, or the age in which one half of the human race became depraved. The duration of the Dwapar Yug is stated at 1,600,000 years, and in this Yug the life of man was reduced to 1000 years. The name of the fourth, or present age, is CALI YUG, in which all mankind are depraved, or rather *lessened*, for that, Mr. Halhed contends, is the true import of cali, or callee. Mr. Holwell, however, seems rather inclined to retain the former interpretation, and urges, in corroboration of his opinion, that while

he sat as Governor General at the head of the judicial court of Cutcherry at Calcutta, he had often heard the most atrocious murders confessed, and an extenuation of their guilt attempted by the culprits' pleading that this was the period of the CALI YUG. The Hindoos suppose that the Cali Yug is ordained to subsist for the space of 400,000 years, of which they say 5000 years are already past; and judiciously remark, that in this revolution the life of man is reduced to the very contracted period of 100 years. The Brahmins affirm, that in this *fallen age*, every species of wickedness shall more and more abound; and, owing to that wickedness, before the expiration of it, (let posterity tremble!) the stature of man shall be so reduced that he will not be able to pluck a berengelah, that is, the *egg-plant*, without the assistance of an hooked stick. The aggregate of the several periods during which the four Yugs are said to have revolved, according to the most moderate computation, as inserted by Sir William Jones in the Asiatic Researches, whose account, in regard to the total amount of the calculation, materially varies from that of the two former writers, constitutes the enormous sum of four million, three hundred, and twenty thousand years.*

But this system is not bounded even by the extended period of 4,320,000 years? No; nor yet by forty millions of such years. "The comprehensive mind of an Indian chronologist knows no bounds. This incredible aggregate multiplied by *seventy-one* is the period in which every MENT is believed to preside over the world; but the reigns of fourteen Menus are only a single day of Brahma, and fifty of such days are elapsed since the creation of the world."†

The professed EPOCH of the Hindoos, according to Abul Fasil, commences with the CREATION OF BRAHMA, and every one of his days is the commencement of a new æra. But what are meant by the DAYS OF BRAHMA? On that point human computation is indeed lost; and rational conjecture absolutely overwhelmed. Every one of the days

* See Asiatic Researches, Vol. I., p. 237.

† Sir W. Jones in Asiatic Researches, Vol. I., p. 237.

of Brahma consists of the astonishing period of fourteen MENUS; and the reader will please to remember what Sir William Jones informed us of in a preceding page, that four million three hundred and twenty thousand years, multiplied by SEVENTY-ONE, constitute the exact period in which every MENU is believed to preside over the world;* yet, after all, the reigns of fourteen of these Menus are only a single day of Brahma!

The Menus are said to be the SONS OF THE WILL OF BRAHMA, and his co-adjutors in the work of creation. It should seem, from a slight variation in their accounts, that Sir William and the Secretary of Akber had not derived their information from exactly the same source, since the latter acquaints us that every Menu comprises, not seventy-one, but only seventy KULEBS, each containing four YUGS, or forty-three lacks and twenty thousand years. In such an extensive scheme of chronology, however, a few thousands, or even millions, of years are not much to be regarded. If the reader should cry out, where are we now then? In what particular portion of the boundless day of Brahma does the present race of human beings sojourn upon earth? He shall receive an answer to his anxious query in the unabridged words of the Ayeen Akbery. "On this, which is the first day of the fifty-first year of the age of Brahma, there have been six Menus; and of the seventh Menu, there have elapsed twenty-seven Kulebs, and three YUGS of the twenty-eighth Kulcb, and four thousand seven hundred years of the fourth YUG." But as this calculation was made above two centuries ago, when Akber sat on the Indian throne, those two centuries must be added to those that preceded them, to give the exact amount of the past years of the present, or CALI YUG.

The birth of BRAHMA then is the grand epocha in the Hindoo chronology. BRAHMA, when understood in a physical, rather than in a theological, point of view, seems to be in India exactly what Osiris, or the SUN, was in Egypt. As we slowly, cautiously, and gradually

advance in this investigation, we shall probably find substantial reason for supposing this mythologic being, considered in this physical sense of the word, to be the same also in person; or at least that SURYA, BRAHMA, and OSIRIS, are very nearly allied both in character and function! We dare not directly hazard the assertion, which has never been yet made; but when the reader calls to mind ALL that has been said concerning the ancient and general worship of the SUN in India, and authenticated by undoubted Sanscree evidence; that Brahma was the first created DEWTAH, a name often applied to the celestial orbs, by whose agency, that is, by whose invigorative heat and light, under the operative impulse of a divine energy, creation rose into being; and that the first and the noblest progeny of Hindostan, that is, the *race of Brahma*, are called the CHILDREN OF THE SUN; the conjecture, however novel and dubious, may possibly not appear totally unfounded. At all events, if the AMARASINAH, a Sanscree dictionary, may be credited, he is considered in India as the *brother* of the solar deity.

The Greek term *Εποχη* signifies a STOP, or POINT. By astronomers the word EPOCHA is used to denote that particular point of the orbit of a planet, wherein that planet is, at some known moment of mean time, in a given meridian; for, as since time is in a continual flux, and the motion of every one of the heavenly bodies round its orbit is in a continual progression, it is necessary to fix upon some moment of time, and some point in that orbit for a beginning of computation.* The unbounded vanity of many nations in the ancient world, but especially of the Egyptians, betrayed them into many vain and absurd attempts to fix the precise epoch of the creation of the world; and Macrobius expressly says, that the Egyptian astronomers taught that, at that period, the sun rose in LEO, and the moon in CANCER.† Hence the former constellation was considered as the habitation of the Sun, or Osiris; and the LION was consequently venerated as the

* Long's Astronomy, Vol. II., p. 421, quarto edit. Cantab. 1764.

† Macrobius in Somnium Scipionis, lib. I., cap. 21. Lugd. Bat. 1760.

* See Asiatic Researches, Vol. I., p. 237; and compare with the Ayeen Akbery, Vol. I., p. 329.

symbol of that celestial asterism upon earth. Hence too the latter sign was considered as the mansion of the Moon, or ISIS. Julius Firmicus, cited in Dr. Jackson's *Chronological Antiquities*, relates that they went beyond even this point of assertion, for that PERSIS and NECEPSO, two of the most ancient philosophers of that nation, taught that the world was created when the sun was in the fifteenth degree of LEO, and the moon in the fifteenth of CANCER.* The Indian astronomers have determined that grand epoch to have taken place when, says Mr. Davis, according to their notions the planets were in conjunction in the beginning of MESHA, or ARIES.† They have too, with minute precision, fixed the exact moment of time in which their CALI YUG, or present grand period, commenced, which they assert to have taken place on the morning of the 18th of February, in the year three thousand one hundred and two, before the Christian era, when there was a remarkable conjunction of the planets, and M. Bailli, *by means of the same retrograde calculations which the Indian astronomers probably used, to find out that memorable circumstance*, has discovered that, in fact, there *was* such a conjunction at that remote period, and, moreover, an eclipse of the moon from which their astronomical time is dated.‡

Some further curious information on this subject is given by Sir William Jones. "From the first chapter of a famous Sanscreeet work, only inferior to the VEDAS themselves in antiquity, and taken, as the Brahmins believe, from the oral instructions of MENU, son of BRAHMA, to the first inhabitants of the earth, he has selected a passage that contains a very curious and important piece of information. In this extract we arrive at once at the information, that the Hindoo chronologists make a distinction between the *day and night of the gods*, and the *day and night of mortals*." "A month is a day and night of the patriarchs, and it is di-

vided into two parts; the bright half is *their* day for laborious exertions, the dark half *their* night for sleep. A year is a day and night of the gods, and that is also divided into two halves; the day is, when the sun moves towards the north; the night, when it moves towards the south. Learn now the duration of a day and a year of Brahma, with that of the ages respectively and in order. Four thousand years of the gods they call the SATYA YUG; and its limits at the beginning and at the end are, in like manner, as many hundreds. In the three successive YUGs or ages, together with their limits at the beginning and end of them, are thousands and hundreds diminished by one. This aggregate of four ages, amounting to twelve thousand divine years, is called an age of the gods; and a thousand such years added together must be considered as a DAY OF BRAHMA: his NIGHT has also the same duration. The before-mentioned age of the gods, or twelve thousand of their years, multiplied by SEVENTY-ONE, form what is called a MANWANTARA. There are alternate creations and destructions of worlds through innumerable MANWANTARAS."* Upon the former part of this passage Sir William cites the conjecture of Mr. PATERSON, equally ingenious and elucidatory: "That as a *month* of mortals is a day and night of the patriarchs, from the analogy of its bright and dark halves; so, by the same analogy, a day and night of mortals might have been considered by the ancient Hindoos as a month of the lower world; and then a year of such months will consist only of twelve days and nights, and thirty such years will compose a lunar year of mortals: whence Mr. Paterson surmises the four million three hundred and twenty thousand years, of which the four Indian ages are supposed to consist, mean only YEARS OF TWELVE DAYS; and, in fact, that sum, divided by thirty, is reduced to an hundred and forty-four thousand. Now a thousand four hundred and forty years are one PADA, a period in the Hindoo astronomy, and that sum, multiplied by eighteen, amounts precisely to TWENTY-FIVE THOUSAND NINE HUNDRED AND TWENTY, the number of years in which

* See the original passage of Julius Firmicus, cited in *Chronolog. Antiq.* Vol. II., p. 14.

† See *Asiatic Researches*, Vol. II., p. 228.

‡ See Bailli's *Astronomie Indienne et Orientale*, p. 110. Quarto edit. à Paris, 1787.

* *Asiatic Researches*, Vol. II., p. 112.

the fixed stars appear to perform their long revolution eastward.*

In illustration of the latter part of this very curious passage from the sacred book of Menu, Sir William proceeds to observe, "that this important period of twenty-five thousand nine hundred and twenty, is well known to arise from the multiplication of three hundred and sixty," (which the reader will remember is the amount of the days of the ancient year) "into SEVENTY-TWO, the number of years in which a fixed star seems to move through a degree of a great circle; and, although M. Le Gentil assures us that the modern Hindoos believe a complete revolution of the stars to be made in twenty-four thousand years, or fifty-four seconds of a degree to be passed in one year, yet we may have reason to think that the *old Indian astronomers had made a more accurate calculation*, but concealed their knowledge from the people under the veil of FOURTEEN MANWANTARAS, SEVENTY-ONE divine ages, compound cycles and years of different sorts from those of BRAHMA to those of PATTALA, or the infernal regions. If we follow the analogy suggested by MENU, and suppose only a day and a night to be called a YEAR, we may divide the number of years in a divine age by three hundred and sixty, and the quotient will be twelve thousand, or the number of his divine years in one age: but, conjecture apart, we need only compare the two periods 4320000 and 25920, and we shall find that, among their common divisors are 6, 9, 12, &c. 18, 36, 72, 144, &c.; which numbers, with their several multiples, especially in a decuple progression, constitute some of the most celebrated periods of the Chaldeans, Greeks, Tartars, and even of the Indians. We cannot fail to observe that the number 342, which appears to be the basis of the Indian system, is a sixtieth part of 25920, and by continuing the comparison we might probably solve the WHOLE ENIGMA.†

Finally, let us state the avowed opinions of the Hindoos.

"The aggregate of the four YUGS they call a DIVINE AGE, and believe

that in every thousand such ages, or in every day of Brahma, fourteen MENUS are successively invested by him with the sovereignty of the earth. Each MENU, they suppose, transmits his empire to his sons and grandsons, during a period of SEVENTY-ONE divine ages; and such a period they name a MANWANTARA: but since *fourteen*, multiplied by *seventy-one*, are not quite a thousand, we must conclude that six divine ages are allowed for intervals between the Manwantaras, or for the twilight of Brahma's day. Thirty such days or CALPAS constitute, in their opinion, a month of Brahma: twelve such months one of his years; and an hundred such years his age; of which age they assert that fifty years have elapsed.**

The Hindoos divide the past epochs of the world into the gold, silver, and copper ages. According to the Brahmins, during the Satya, or golden age, the supreme VEESHNU himself descended at four different periods; during the succeeding Treta, or silver age, that deity descended three times; in the Dwarpar, or copper age, the brazen age of the Greeks, only twice; and in the present, Cali, or earthen age of 432000 years duration, the iron age of the Greeks, the earth is only to be honoured once with his presence, when all the impious are to be extirpated.

The above curious division of the time, which they suppose the world is to last, into so many distinct periods, each gradually decreasing in extent, is connected with the favourite but romantic notion entertained by those philosophers, that virtue has decreased after a certain arithmetical proportion in the four ages above enumerated. In our next we shall resume the Hindoo mythology; accompanied with a representation of the second person in the Hindoo godhead, Veeshnu.

* Asiatic Researches, Vol. II., p. 116.

PATON & LOVE, 10, Nelson Street, Glasgow; WATSON, 5, Paul's Alley, Paternoster Row; and HETHERINGTON, London; Heywood, Manchester; HOBSON, Leeds; and W. & H. ROBINSON, Edinburgh.

* See Asiatic Researches, Vol. II., p. 115.

† Asiatic Researches, Vol. II., p. 114.

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THE WORLD'S PANTHEON; OR, THE PICTURE GALLERY OF SUPERSTITION.

NO. II.—EXPLANATION OF THE GODS, AND SUPERNATURAL MACHINERY OF THE
HINDOO RELIGION—*Vishnu.*



VISHNU—the second person of the Hindoo Trinity.

Our last article, to some extent, explained the figure which stands at the head of the present. Vishnu, the Preserver, the second person in the Hindoo godhead, being referred to in the explanation given of Brahme, the Creator. "The learned Indians, as they are instructed by their own books, acknowledge only One Supreme Being, whom they call Brahme, or the Great One, in the neuter gender: they believe his

Essence to be infinitely removed from the comprehension of any mind but his own; and they suppose him to manifest his power by the operation of his divine spirit, whom they name Vishnu, the Pervader, and Narayan, or *Moving on the Waters*, both in the masculine gender, whence he is often denominated the *First Male*; and by this power they believe that the whole order of nature is preserved and supported.

"When they consider the Divine Power exerted in *creating*, or in giving existence to that which existed not before, they call the Deity Brahma, in the masculine gender also; and when they view him in the light of *Destroyer*, or rather *Changer* of forms, they give him a thousand names, of which Siva, Isa, or Iswara, Rudra, Hara, Sambhu, and Mahadéva, or Mahésa, are the most common. The first operations of these three *Powers* are variously described in the different Purānas by a number of allegories, and from them we may deduce the Ionian Philosophy of *primeval water*, the doctrine of the Mundane Egg, and the veneration paid to the Nymphæ, or Lotos, which was anciently revered in Egypt, as it is at present in Hindustān, Tibet, and Népal. The Tibetians are said to embellish their temples and altars with it: and a native of Népal made prostrations before it on entering my study, where the fine plant and beautiful flowers lay for examination. Mr. Holwell, in explaining his first plate, supposes Brahmā to be floating on a leaf of *betel* in the midst of the abyss; but it was manifestly intended by a bad painter for a Lotos leaf, or for that of the Indian fig-tree; nor is the species of pepper known in Bengal by the name of *Tāmbūla*, and on the coast of Malabar by that of *betel*, held sacred, as he asserts, by the Hindus, or necessarily cultivated under the inspection of Brāhmins; though, as the vines are tender, all the plantations of them are carefully se-

cured, and ought to be cultivated by a particular tribe of Sūdras, who are thence called Tábūlis.*" Sir William Jones goes on to say, "M. Sonnerat informs us, that Vishnu is represented in some places riding on the Garúda, which he supposes to be the Pondicheri eagle of Brisson, especially as the Brāhmins of the coast highly venerate that bird, and provide food for numbers of them at stated hours. I rather conceive the Garuda to be a fabulous bird, but agree with him, that the Hindu God who rides on it, resembles the ancient Jupiter. In the old temples at Gayà, Vishnu is either mounted on this poetical bird, or attended by it together with a little page; but, lest an etymologist should find Ganymed in Garud, I must observe that the Sanscrit word is pronounced Garura; though I admit that the Grecian and Indian stories of the celestial bird and the page appear to have some resemblance."

Vishnu, according to the sacred books of the Brāhmins, has descended nine times upon the earth, to save mankind from destructions. These descensions, called Avatars, will be explained in future numbers, accompanied with illustrations of the God as represented under the different incarnations assumed. To save repetition, we shall postpone the further consideration of this divinity, until we come to treat of the Avatars.

* Sir W. Jones in Asiatic Researches.

POPULAR MYTHOLOGY OF THE MIDDLE AGES.*

When the fables of popular superstition are contemplated in detail, we discover a singular degree of uniformity in that realm wherein most diversity might be expected, in the ideal world. Imagination seems to possess a boundless power of creation and combination; and yet the beings which have their existence only in fancy, when freely called into action, in every climate and every age, betray so close an affinity to one another, that it is scarcely possible

to avoid admitting that imagination had little share in giving them their shape and form. Their attributes and character are impressed by tokens proving that they resulted rather from a succession of doctrines, than from invention; that they were traditive, and not arbitrary. The vague credulity of the peasant agrees with the systematic mythology of the sages of primeval times. Nations whom the ocean separates, are united by their delusions. The village gossip recognizes, though in ignorance, the divinities of classical antiquity, and the Hamadryads of Greece, and the Elves of Scandinavia join the phantoms

* The above is condensed from a very able article which appeared in an early Number of the Quarterly Review.

who swarm around us when, under the guidance of the wizzard, we enter that gloomy dell,—

“where the sad mandrake grows,
Whose groans are deathful, the dead-numbing
nightshade,

The stupifying hemlock, adder's tongue,
And martagan.—The shrieks of luckless owls,
We hear, and croaking night-crows in the air;
Green-bellied snakes, blue fire-drakes in the
sky,

And giddy flutter-mice with leather wings,
And scaly beetles with their habergeons
That make a bumming murmur as they fly.
There in the stocks of trees white fays do
dwell,

And span-long elves that dance about a pool
With each a little changeling in their arms;
The airy spirits play with falling stars,
And mount the sphere of fire.”

All mythology has been governed by a uniform principle, pervading its creations with plastic energy, and giving an unaltering and unalterable semblance of consistency to the successive developments of error. Divested of its mythic or poetic garb, it will be found that the creative power is the doctrine of fatality. Oppressed by the wretchedness of its nature, without some infallible guide, the human mind shrinks from contemplation, and cowers in its own imbecility; it reposes in the belief of predestination, which enables us to bear up against every misery, and solves those awful doubts which are scarcely less tolerable than misery.—The Gordian knot is cut, and the web is unravelled, when all things are seen subordinate to Fate, to that stern power, which restrains the active intelligences of good and evil, dooming the universe of spirit and of matter to be the battlefield of endless strife between the light and the darkness.—Whether the rites of the “false religions full of pomp and gold” have been solemnized in the sculptured cavern or in the resplendent temple, in the shade of the forest, or on the summit of the mountain, still the same lesson has been taught. Men and Gods vainly struggle to free themselves from the adamantine bonds of destiny. The oracle or the omen which declares the impending evil, affords no method of averting it. All insight into futurity proves a curse to those on whom the power descends. We hear the warning which we cannot obey. The gleam of

light which radiates athwart the abyss only increases its horror. No gift which the favouring intelligence strives to bestow upon a mortal can be received without an admixture of evil, from which the powerful spirit of beneficence cannot defend it; but neither can the malice of the eternal enemy prevail and triumph; it may scath but not consume.

Upon fatality and the tenet of conflicting power, popular mythology is wholly founded, the basis reappears in every trivial tale of supernatural agency, and the gossip sitting in the chimney nook is embued with all the wisdom of the hierophants of Greece, or the magi of Persia. As the destroying principle appears more active in this lower world, Oromanes has prevailed in popular belief. Orb is involved in orb, the multiplied reflexions become fainter and fainter, the strange and fantastic forms are variously tinted and refracted, some are bright and glorious as the rainbow, others shadowy and grey, yet all turn unto the central image, the personification of the principle of Evil.

Amidst the evanescent groups whose revels are embodied in the noble lines of the moral dramatist, the Fairies are the most poetical and the most potent; and many theories respecting their origin have been founded on their names. Morgain la fay has been readily identified with Mergian Peri. We may, however, be allowed to observe, that arguments drawn from similarity of sound are frequently convincing without being conclusive. The romance of Merlin describes Morgain as a brunette; in spite, however, of this venerable authority, the fairy dame is evidently *Morgwynn*, the white damsel, corresponding with the white women of ghostly memory, and a true-born child of the Cymry.

The homely rhymes of John Heywood enumerate a number of the popular demons and spirits of those times. He tell us that—

“In John Milesius any man may read
Of divels in Sarmatia honoured
Call'd KOTRI or KOBALDI, such as we
PUGS and HOBGOBLINS call; their dwellings be
In corners of old houses least frequented,
Or beneath stacks of wood; and these con-
victed
Make fearful noise in buttries and in dairies,

ROBIN GOODFELLOWS some, some call them
FAIRIES.
In solitary rooms these uproars keep,
And beat at doors to wake men from their
sleep,
Seeming to force locks be they ne'er so strong
And keeping Christmasse gambols all night
long."

At first we may not be pleased with the infernal relationship assigned to the lithe and sportive subjects of Oberon and Titania; but Heywood is supported in the arrangement of his "Lucifugi" by the authority of all the orthodox theologians of the last age, whether Catholics or Protestants, who, with many a text and argument from Scripture and the Fathers, laboured earnestly and effectually in proving that the kith and kin of the queen of Elfland are no other than Satan himself in various disguises.—Such is the first who answers to our call, the merry wanderer PUCK, who long had a domicile in the house of the grey friars at Schwerin in Mecklenburgh, which he haunted in the form of a Pug or monkey. Puck, notwithstanding the tricks which he played upon all strangers who visited the monastery, was sufficiently useful to its inmates; he turned the spit, drew the wine, and cleaned the kitchen, while all the lay-brothers were snoring: yet, in spite of all these services, the monk to whom we owe the "*Veredica Relatio de Demonio Puck*," has properly described him as an "impure spirit." The Puck of Schwerin received for his wages two brass pots and a party-coloured jacket, to which a bell was appended.

Friar Rush is Puck under another name. Puck is also found under the character of ROBIN GOODFELLOW or ROBIN HOOD,—the outlaw acquired his bye-name from his resemblance to the unquiet wandering spirit. The Robin Hood of England is also the Scottish RED CAP and the Saxon spirit HUDKEN or HODEKEN—so called from the hoodiken, or little hood or hat which he wore, and which also covers his head when he appears in the shape of the *Nisse* of Sweden.

Hooдекin was ever ready to aid his friends or acquaintance, whether clerks or laymen. A native of Hildesheim, who distrusted the fidelity of his wife, said to him, when he was about to

depart on a journey, "I pray thee, have an eye upon my wife whilst I am abroad: I commend my honour to thy care." Hooдекin accepted the trust without anticipating the nature of his labours. Paramour succeeded paramour—Hooдекin broke the shins of the first, led the second into the horse-pond, and thrust the third into the muck-heap; and yet the dame had well nigh evaded his vigilance. "Friend," exclaimed the weary Devil to the husband, when he returned to Hildesheim, "take thy wife back; as thou left'st her, even so thou find'st her; but never set me such a task again: sooner would I tend all the swine in the woods of Westphalia, than undertake to keep one woman constant against her will."

In Swedeland Puck assumes the denomination of NISSEGOODRENG, or Nisse the good knave—and consorts with the TOMTEGUBBE, or the *Old Man of the house toft*, who is of the same genus: they are found in every farm-house, kind and serviceable when kindly treated, yet irascible and capricious; and the dairy-maid has an ill time of it, who chances to offend them. In the neighbouring kingdom of Denmark, the Pucks have wonderful cunning in music; and there is a certain jig or dance called the Elf-king's dance, well known amongst the country crowd, which yet no one dares to play. Its notes produce the same effect as Oberon's horn—old and young are compelled to foot it to the tune, nay, the very stools and tables begin to caper; nor can the musician undo the charm unless he is able to play the dance backwards without misplacing a single note, or unless one of the involuntary dancers can contrive to pass behind him and cut the strings of the fiddle by reaching over his shoulder.

The names of Spirits of this class are pertinent and significant. From "Gubbe," "the old man," employed as the name of a demon, the Normans seem to have formed GOBLIN or GOBELIN (quasi GUBBELEIN). Saint Taurinus expelled him from the Temple of Diana at Evreux; though he continued, says Ordericus Vitalis, to haunt the town in various shapes, but harmless and playful, for the saint had bound him to do no further injury. The Devil of Evreux seems to have migrated from

thence to Caen. In the course of last summer the citizens of the good town of William the Conqueror were much annoyed by him; he was arrayed in white armour, and was so tall that he looked into the upper-story windows. Monsieur le Commandant chanced to meet the intruder in a cul de sac, and challenged him, but the Demon capiously answered—*Ce n'est pas de toi que j'ai reçu ma commission, et ce n'est pas à toi que je veux en rendre compte*,—and six more devils started up all of the same size, and clad in the same uniform; whereupon the Commandant thought it prudent to decamp. The Spanish DUENDE appears to correspond in every respect to the Tomte-gubbe, and the name, according to Cobaruvias, is contracted from *Dueno de Casa*, the master of the house. This Demon was particularly noted for his powers of transformation, and thus in Calderon's excellent comedy of "La Dama Duende," the gracioso, or clown, maintains that he appeared in the shape of a little friar.

In all these instances the influence of language in embodying belief and giving it tenacity, is very apparent. A more curious exemplification of this process is afforded by the name of Puck as applied to the Evil one, which also furnishes a striking proof of the steadiness with which the meaning first annexed to a verbal sign adheres to it throughout the modifications which it receives in language, whilst the mind retains the leading idea annexed to the root with equal obstinacy. The gradual transition from delusion to sport and merriment, and from sport and merriment to mischief, and from mischief to terror is very observable. PÆCCAN or PÆCCAN, (A.S.) signifies to "deceive by false appearances, to delude, to impose upon." In the cognate Nether Saxon, the verb PICKEN signifies to gambol, and when inflected into PICKELN and PÆCKELN, to play the fool. From the Anglo-Saxon root we have PACK or PATCH, the fool,* whilst from PICKELN and PÆCKELN are derived PICKLE, a mischievous boy; and the PICKLEHERIN of the Germans, a merry-andrew or zany, so called from his hairy, or perhaps leafy vestment. Ac-

cording to this analogy, Ben Jonson introduces the devil PUCKHAIRY, who probably appeared in the shaggy garb which he is well known to have worn in his character of Robin Hood, or Robin Goodfellow. PUEKE and PUCK are the sportive devils of the Goths and Teutons. When used in a milder sense, it became POIKE (Sueo-Gothic), a boy, and PIGA (A.S.), PIGE (Dan.), a girl, from their playfulness. PUG in old English, and BOGLE in Scottish, are equivalent to PUCK; and some of our readers may not be aware that the monkey acquired the name of Pug from his malice. BWG, in the British language, is a goblin; and BOG,* the angry god of the Slavi, is still the same identical term. BUCCA (A.S.) a goat, and BUCK, were so called from their skittish, savage nature; the former being the favourite incarnation of Satan. In ΒΑΚΧΕΥΩ we trace the mischievous mirth and wild inspiration caused by the delusion of wine; and we think that in PECCARE we discern the agency of error and deceit.†

According to the Scandinavian mythology, which is the chief foundation of all our popular creeds, Odin assumes the name of the NIKAR or HNICKAR when he acts as the destroying or evil principle. In this character he inhabits the lakes and rivers of Scandinavia, where, under the ancient appellation of the NIKKER, (the Scottish Kelpie,) he raises sudden storms and tempests, and leads mankind into destruction. There is a gloomy lake in the island of Rugen, its waters are turbid, and its shores covered with thick woods. This he loves to haunt; here he vexes the

* We observe that Mr. Scott, in his "Harold the Dauntless," chooses to consider the Slavonian Zernebock, the "Black Demon," as a Scandinavian deity, and Mr. Lawrence Templeton has committed the same error in Ivanboe. Both Mr. Scott and Mr. Templeton seem to have been misled by old Elias Sebedius.

† The same root is possibly the origin of the BOCKET, a Larva or terriculentum which school-boys use to make by scooping out a turnip. A friendly antiquary suggests also that OLD POKER or TOM POKER, who haunted the nursery in Horace Walpole's time, belongs to the same family. And we suppose him to have been the Sueo-Gothic TOMTE-PUEKE, or HOUSE PUCK.

fishermen, and amuses himself by placing their boats on the summits of the loftiest fir-trees.

Propitiatory worship is offered to the being which is feared.—So strangely has the hagiology of the middle ages amalgamated itself with the more ancient popular mythology, that the Nekker, (our old Nick,) by an easy transition, became the St. NICHOLAS, the patron of sailors, whose aid is invoked in storms and tempests. Many churches near the sea-shore, both in this country and on the continent, are dedicated to him, and many a prayer to St. Nicholas is yet offered by the seaman sailing by. The common people in Catholic countries also misunderstand the attribute of the Saint. With them the three clerks in the tub, who always accompany his image, are considered as three sailors in a boat.

The Scandinavian Nekker generated the River-men and River-maids, the Teutonic Nixes. None of the latter are more celebrated than the nymphs of the Elbe and the Saal. In the days of paganism, the Saxons, who dwelt in the district between these rivers, worshipped a female Deity, whose temple was situated in the town of Magdeburgh or Meydeburgh, "the Maiden's Castle;" and who still continued to be feared as the nymph of the Elbe in after-times. Often did she appear at Magdeburgh, where she was wont to visit the market with her basket hanging on her arm—she was gentle in her manner, and neat in her dress, and nothing differing in appearance from a burgher's daughter; yet one corner of her snow-white apron appeared constantly wet, as a token of her aquatic nature.* Pretorius, a credulous yet valuable writer of the sixteenth century, tells us, that the Elbe nymph sometimes sits on the banks of the river combing her golden hair, a description agreeing with the rude "counterfeyt" which Botho has given, probably from tradition, of the Goddesses of Magdeburgh. Beautiful and fair as the Nixes seem to be, the ruling principle retains its unity—the evil is only veiled—and the water-nymphs as-

sert their affinity to the deluder, the tormentor, the destroyer. Inevitable death awaits the wretch who is seduced by their charms. They seize and drown the swimmer, and entice the child; and when they anticipate that their malevolence will be gratified, they are seen gaily darting over the surface of the waters.

We have been informed by credible witnesses, that the late inundations in the Valais were caused by Demons, who, if not strictly Nekkers or Nixes, are at least of an amphibious nature.* There is a mountain, near the Vallée de Bagnes, upon which the Devils used to meet; and in January, one thousand eight hundred and eighteen, two mendicant friars from Sion, who had received information of this unlawful assembly, ascended the hill for the purpose of ascertaining their number and intentions.—"Reverend Sirs," quoth a Devil who came forward as spokesman, "there are so many of us here, that if we were to divide all the alps and all the glaciers between us, share and share alike, we should not have a pound weight a-piece." When the glaciers first burst, the Devil was seen swimming down the Rhone with a drawn sword in one hand and a golden ball in the other: as soon as he came opposite to the town of Martigny he cried out in patois, "*Aigue essaüça*," and immediately the obedient river swelled above its banks, and destroyed the greater part of the town, which is yet in ruins.

By philosophizing upon popular mythology were formed the Nymphs or Undines of Paracelsus. This "most excellent, erudite and widely-famed physician," who combined a certain portion of poetical and romantic fancy with his madness, has thought it necessary to give advice to those who chance to become the husbands of an Undine, and even those of a mere mortal might perhaps profit by a sober application of the moral of the apologue. Secrecy and constancy are enjoined by the nymph, and her commands are to be strictly observed, or her love is forfeited for ever; she will plunge into her watery home, leaving her partner in

* The tradition ascribed to the *Mermaid's well* in the *Bride of Lammermoor*, is in truth imitated from a tradition relating to the nymph of the Elbe, given by MM. Grimm.

* This story is current amongst the peasants in the neighbourhood of St. Maurice, where it was related to us, last summer.

cheerless solitude. Paracelsus often appeals to the fate of that valiant knight Sir Peter of Stauffenburg in support of the problems which he lays down. Fairy love, according to the older authority of Gervase of Tilbury, was enjoyed upon the same conditions; and the doctrine is fully exemplified in the adventures of Lanval and Gralent, of Melusina and Meliora, no less than in the history of Venus and Anchises.

Thanks to the pious care of the Inquisition, there are but few memorials remaining of the popular mythology of the Spaniards; it therefore becomes interesting to collect its imperfect vestiges. Such is the legend relating to the demoniac origin of the princely family of Haro. Don Diego Lopez, the Lord of Biscay, was lying in wait for the wild boar, when he heard the voice of a woman singing. The damsel was standing on the summit of a rock; exceedingly beautiful, and richly attired. Don Diego offered to marry her; she told him that she was of high lineage, and accepted his hand, but upon this condition,—he was never to pronounce a holy name. The fair bride had one foot like the foot of a goat—this was her only blemish: yet Diego loved her well, and had two children by her, a son, named Iniguez Guerra, and a daughter. It happened, as they were sitting at table, that the Lord of Biscay threw a bone to the dogs; a mastiff and a spaniel quarrelled about it, and the spaniel gripped the mastiff by the throat and throttled him. "Holy Mary," exclaimed Don Diego, "who ever saw the like!" The lady instantly grasped the hands of her children. Diego seized the boy, but the mother glided through the air with the daughter, to the mountains. In the course of time, Don Diego Lopez invaded the land of the Moors, who took him prisoner, and bound him, and as a prisoner they led him to Toledo. Greatly did Iniguez Guerra grieve at the captivity of his father; and the men of the land told him, that there was no help, unless he could find his mother. Iniguez rode alone to the mountains, and behold! his fairy mother stood on the rock.—"My son," said she, "come to me, for well do I know thy errand."—And she called PARDALO, the horse who ran without a rider in the mountains, and put a bridle

into his mouth; and told Iniguez Guerra that he must neither give him food nor water, nor unsaddle him nor unbridle him, nor put shoes upon his feet; and that in one single day the demon-steed would carry him to Toledo.*

There is a philosophy involved in these parables. The consortship of an immortal being is bestowed upon humankind, and the slight tribute of obedience to a single behest, will ensure the happiness of the mortal. But his will is enslaved; Destiny allows him not to rise above the frailty of his race by perpetuating the mystic union; and power is given to the evil principle to mock his transient bliss, and to dash away the cup of happiness which had been placed at his lips. The fated thought rankles in his mind, the forbidden word is uttered, and the ethereal intelligence departs for ever, but in sorrow and in mourning. And as she mourns the separation, she yet strives to shed a benignant influence upon the object to whom she was wedded. Aphrodite watches the fortunes of her son. The Rock-nymph of Biscay rescues her captive husband. And Melusina weeps over the cradles of her sleeping babes, and her lamentations are wafted by the nightly winds which eddy round the hoary towers of Lusignan.

Snorro Sturleson, or whoever else the compiler of the Prosaic Edda may have been, teaches us that the Elves of light, the white fays of Ben Jonson, sojourn in *Alfheim*, the palace of the sky; whilst the bowels of the earth re-

* The conclusion of the legend exhibits the fairy dame as appearing again in Biscay in the shape of an incubus.

— For spirits when they please,
Can either sex assume, or both.

The steed of Iniguez Guerra reminds us of the mysterious horse of Giraldo de Cabreiro the Knight of Catalonia, who always brought good fortune to his master. This horse would dance amongst the beauties of the court of King Alphonso, to the sound of the viol, and do many other acts bespeaking strange intelligence, far surpassing a horse's capacity. Gervase of Tilbury could not settle the genus of this animal to his satisfaction. If he was a horse, exclaims the Chancellor, how could he perform such feats? If he was a fairy, why did he eat?—*Otia Imperialia*, l. iii. c. 92.

FREE-THINKERS' INFORMATION FOR THE PEOPLE.

ceive the Swart-elves, the Elves of darkness: immortality is the lot of the first, for the flames of "Surtur" will not consume them, and their final dwelling-place will be in *Vid-blain*, the highest heaven of the blessed; but the last are obnoxious to disease and death. The modern Icelanders choose to consider the elvish commonwealth as an absolute monarchy, at least they believe that their elves are governed by a viceroy, who travels twice a year to Norway accompanied by a deputation of Pucks, to renew their fealty to the supreme monarch, who still resides in the mother-country; it being evident from the texture of the fable that the elves, like themselves, are merely colonists in the island. Closely allied to the dark elves are the Dwarfs or Dvergars of Scandinavia. The Norwegians ascribe the regularity and polish of rock crystal to the diligence of the little denizens of the mountains, and their voice is heard in the dvergama, the mountain echo.—From this poetical personification arose a peculiar system of Icelandic metre called *Galdralag*, or the magical lay, in which the last line is repeated at the end of each stanza; and when a ghost or a spirit is introduced singing in an Icelandic Saga, it is the *galdralag* which is always employed. In another variety of the *galdralag* the beginning of each line is repeated: this system is found in some of the metrical charms of the Anglo-Saxons. Such repetitions have a solemn monotonous sound, and hence, without the help of fiction, it has occurred to other bards. Dante employs the *galdralag* in the inscription placed over the gates of Hell, and Pope concludes his elegy in this magic strain.

It has been thought that the real prototypes of the mythological Dvergars are found in the Finnic inhabitants of Scandinavia. But we now begin to doubt the accuracy of the opinion. Certain it is that the Finns were proud of dealing with the Devil, until that species of commerce was declared to be contraband; and they were ever dreaded as wizzards and conjurors. But notwithstanding their skill in magic and in metallurgy they must be distinguished from the cunning workmen who manufactured the hammer of Thor, the

golden tresses of Siva and the wealth-begetting ring of Odin; and who hold a conspicuous situation in the wild cosmogony of the Asi. If we were to develop these mysteries according to the true hieroglyphical wisdom of the ancient Rosicrucians, we might contend that these beings were personifications of the metallic element, or of the gases which are its vehicles within the bowels of the earth, filling the veins which become pregnant with the ore, and circulating along with the electric and magnetic life of the macrocosm.—At all events they are too purely allegorical to have resulted from the ideas of magic annexed to the character of the scattered Finlanders. A stronger inference of their primitive antiquity may be drawn from their appearance in the very ancient traditions of the Teutons as preserved in the *Niebelungen lay*, and in the *Book of Heroes*, which both originated and were matured in regions where the Finn never pitched his tent, and amongst mountains in whose recesses he never was secluded. Of late years there have been a great many doubts respecting the orthodoxy of the *Edda*; and the learned and intelligent Professor Rask of Berlin has attacked its authenticity with great zeal: it is therefore satisfactory to the antiquary to compare the *Book of Heroes* with the *Edda*. Long as the Teutons had been separated from the Scandinavian nations, their fables still maintained the utmost uniformity, and this coincidence proves, that neither have been corrupted or interpolated.

Mining countries have often become the strong-hold of popular mythology. Cornwall may be instanced; and thus also the Harzwald in Hanover, the remnant of the Hercynian forest, is entirely enchanted ground. "In this district," says an old author, "are more than an hundred and ten capital mines, some of which have small ones belonging to them; some are worked for the king of Great Britain (as Elector of Hanover) on his own account, and the rest farmed out."

(To be continued.)

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FREE-THINKERS' INFORMATION FOR THE PEOPLE.

"LET ALL HAVE FULL LIBERTY TO TEACH AND MAINTAIN WHATEVER OPINIONS THEY
MAY CHOOSE."—*Melancthon.*

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THE WORLD'S PANTHEON; OR, THE PICTURE GALLERY OF SUPERSTITION.

NO. III.—EXPLANATION OF THE GODS AND SUPERNATURAL MACHINERY OF THE
HINDOO RELIGION—*Siva.*



SIVA—the third person of the Hindoo Trinity.

The function of Siva, or Mahadeva, the third person in the Hindoo Trinity, is that of Destroyer or changer of forms. In this, according to Sir William Jones, he corresponds with Olympian Jove.

"It was in the capacity of Avenger and Destroyer, that Jove encountered and overthrew the Titans and Giants, whom Typhon, Briareus, Tityus, and the rest of their fraternity, led against

the God of Olympus; to whom an Eagle brought *lightning* and *thunderbolts* during the warfare. Thus, in a similar contest between Siva and the Daityas, or children of Diti, who frequently rebelled against heaven, Brahma is believed to have presented the God of Destruction with *fiery shafts*. One of the many poems, entitled *Ramayana*, the last book of which has been translated into Italian, contains

an extraordinary dialogue between the crow Bhushunda, and a rational Eagle, named Garuda, who is often painted with the face of a beautiful youth, and the body of an imaginary bird; and one of the eighteen Puranas bears his name, and comprises his whole history.

"As the Olympian Jupiter fixed his court and held his councils on a lofty and brilliant mountain, so the appropriated seat of Mahadeva, whom the Saivas consider as the Chief of the Deities, was mount Cailasa, every splinter of whose rocks was an inestimable gem. His terrestrial haunts are the snowy hills of Himalaya, or that branch of them to the east of the Brahmaputra, which has the name of Chandrasic' hara, or the Mountain of the Moon. When, after all these circumstances, we learn that Siva is believed to have *three* eyes, whence he is named also Trilochan, and know from Pausanias, not only that Triophthalmos was an epithet of Zeus, but that a statue of him had been found so early as the taking of Troy, with a *third eye in his forehead*, as we see him represented by the Hindus, we must conclude, that the identity of the two Gods falls little short of being demonstrated.

"In the character of Destroyer also we may look upon this Indian Deity as corresponding with the Stygian Jove, or Pluto; especially since Cali, or Time in the feminine gender, is a name of his consort, who will appear hereafter to be Proserpine. Indeed, if we can rely on a Persian translation of the Bhagavat, the sovereign of Patala, or the Infernal Regions, is the King of Serpents, named Seshanaga; for Crishna is there said to have descended with

his favourite Arjun to the seat of that formidable divinity, from whom he instantly obtained the favour which he requested, that the souls of a Brahman's six sons, who had been slain in battle, might reanimate their respective bodies; and Seshanaga is thus described. 'He had a gorgeous appearance, with a thousand heads, and, on each of them a crown set with resplendent gems, one of which was larger and brighter than the rest; his eyes gleamed like flaming torches; but his neck, his tongues, and his body, were black; the skirts of his habiliment were yellow, and a sparkling jewel hung in every one of his ears; his arms were extended, and adorned with rich bracelets; and his hands bore the holy shell, the radiated weapon, the mace for war, and the lotos.' Thus Pluto was often exhibited in painting and sculpture with a diadem and sceptre; but himself and his equipage were of the blackest shade.

"There is yet another attribute of Mahadeva, by which he is too visibly distinguished in the drawings and temples of Bengal. To destroy, according to the Vedantis of India, the Susis of Persia, and many philosophers of our European schools, is only to *generate* and *reproduce* in another form. Hence the God of Destruction is holden in this country to preside over Generation; as a symbol of which he rides on a white bull."

Our next number shall commence the Avatars, or Incarnations of Vishnu, which shall be accurately described by translations from the original Hindoo scriptures, with accompanying explanations of their allegorical and astronomical meanings.

POPULAR MYTHOLOGY OF THE MIDDLE AGES (*continued*).

According to ancient chronicles King Ilsung held his court at Weringerode in this forest, about the time of Gideon, judge of Israel, and Ilsung was the son of King Laurin, the dwarfish monarch and guardian of the garden of roses, who flourished in the time of

Ehud, judge of Israel, in the year of the world 2550.—These dates have been ascertained by the diligent chroniclers of the uncritical ages, who took great pains to force ancient fables into synchronism with the facts recorded by authentic historians. In the existing text of the Book of Heroes the Hercynian forest is not assigned to the sway of Laurin; but the chroniclers were probably also guided by local traditions

* The above is condensed from a very able article which appeared in an early Number of the Quarterly Review.

and even now the dwarfs and cobolds (spirits of the mine) still swarm in every cavern.

Malignity is constantly ascribed to the goblins of the mine. We are told by the sage demonologist quoted by Reginald Scott, "that they do exceedingly envy man's benefit in the discovery of hidden treasure, ever haunting such places where money is concealed, and diffusing malevolent and poisonous influences to blast the lives and limbs of those that dare attempt the discovery thereof.—Peters of Devonshire with his confederates, who, by conjuration, attempted to dig for such defended treasures, was crumbled to atoms as it were, being reduced to ashes with his confederates in the twinkling of an eye."

Peters of Devonshire sought his fate. But the Demons who haunted mines were considered as most tremendous. "The nature of such is very violent; they do often slay whole companies of labourers, they do sometimes send inundations that destroy both the mines and miners, they bring noxious and malignant vapours to stifle the laborious workmen; briefly, their whole delight and faculty consists in killing, tormenting, and crushing men who seek such treasures. Such was Annabergius, a most virulent animal that utterly confounded the undertakings of those that laboured in the richest silver mine in Germany called *Corona Rosacea*. He would often show himself in the likeness of a he-goat, with golden horns, pushing down the workmen with great violence, sometimes like a horse breathing pestilence and flames from his nostrils. At other times he represented a monk in all his pontificals, flouting at their labour and treating all their actions with scorn and indignation, till by his daily and continual molestation he gave them no further ability of perseverance."*

Like all other ancient nations, the

* Some will perhaps suspect that this virulent animal Annabergius was in truth a certain familiar spirit now called Hydrogen gas.—Sir Humphrey Davy's safety lamp would have been an effectual spell against all the Demons of the Crown of roses; and Boulton and Watt, by employing the strong arm of the Enchanter Steam, would have enabled the luckless workmen to defend themselves against the inundations which they poured into the mine.

Scandinavians cherished the belief in the existence of tutelary Spirits, and the Icelanders had reason to be peculiarly grateful to them for defeating the enterprize of king Harold Gormson. The king of Norway, as we are told in his Saga, was desirous of learning the internal state of the island, upon which he longed to wreak his vengeance, and to that intent he bade a skilful Trolldman, or magician, fare thither, changing himself into such a shape as might best conceal him. The magician changed himself into a whale, and swam to the island; but the rocks and mountains were covered with opposing "Landvættur," or guardian spirits, who prepared to defend their trust. The magician, nothing appalled, swam to Vapna-ford, and attempted to land, but a huge and hideous dragon unwreathed his folds down the sides of the rocks, and followed by innumerable serpents, descended into the æstuary, spitting venom against the intruder. The whale could not oppose them, and swam westward to Oreford; but there came down a bird whose wings extended athwart the bay from mountain to mountain, followed by countless flocks of spirits in the same shape. And when he attempted to enter Bridaford on the southern coast, a mighty bull rushed down and waded into the sea roaring tremendously, and the guardian spirits of Bridaford accompanied their leader. The unwearied magician now swam to Vrekarskinda; there he beheld a giant coming to meet him, whose head ranged over the very summit of the snow-clad mountains. He was armed with an iron club, and a crowd of gigantic spirits followed him to the shore. This story is worthy of notice, because it proves that the Scandinavians had their elemental intelligences according to the true Paracelsian doctrine. Earth sent her spirits in the form of giants; the Sylphs appeared as birds; by the Bull, water is obviously typified; and the Dragon proceeded from the sphere of fire.

Hecla is in some degree connected with the Scandic mythology. The Northmen were converted soon after its terrors became known to them, and when they became Christians they could only consider it as the mouth of hell, like Etna and Vesuvius and Stromboli,

each of which has good claim to be considered as the *facilis descensus Averni*; since (to say nothing of old Boots) Nero and Theodoric of Verona, and Julian the apostate, and Dagobert, and Queen Elizabeth, and Anna Bullen have all severally been seen to sink into their sulphureous flames: but this baleful mountain could not fail to be the resort of the spirits of fire, whom tradition had probably known in Scandinavia or in Asgard. Their great opponent was Luridan. It is written in the "book of Vanagastus the Norwegian," that Luridan, the spirit of the air, "travels at the behest of the magician to Lapland, and Finnmark, and Skrickfinia, even unto the frozen ocean.—It is his nature to be always at enmity with fire"—and he wages continual war with the fiery spirits of the mountain Hecla.—"In this contest they do often extirpate and destroy one another, killing and crushing when they meet in violent troops in the air upon the sea. And at such time many of the fiery spirits are destroyed when the enemy hath brought them off the mountain to fight upon the water: on the contrary when the battle is on the mountain itself, the spirits of the air are often worsted, and then great mournings and doleful noises are heard in Iceland, and Russia and Norway for many days after."

Amongst the minor spirits of the sphere of fire, Jack-with-the-lantern, whom Milton calls the Friar, and Will-with-the-wisp must not be forgotten. According to the chronicle of the Abbey of Corvey, brother Sebastian was seduced by one of these infernal link-boys on the mystic eve of St. John, in the year 1034, as he was returning home in the evening after having preached at a neighbouring village—and on the following day brother Sebastian died. The German peasants believe with reasonable consistency that Will-with-the-wisp is of a very fiery temper and easily offended. They have a "spott reim," or mocking verse, which angers him mainly when he happens to hear it.

Heerwisch; ho! ho! ho!
Brennst wie haberstroh
Schag mich blitzeblow!

About thirty years ago a girl of the village of Lorsch wantonly sang out this rhyme whilst Will was dancing

over the marshy meadows; instantly he followed the maiden; she ran homewards as fast as her legs could carry her, vainly striving to escape the spiteful goblin, but just as she was crossing the threshold of the door, Will flew in after her, and struck every person in the room with his fiery wings so violently that they were stunned by the shock. It requires no great sagacity to divine the positive nature of this electric demon; with him also must be classed the fire-demons who point out concealed treasures by playing in livid flames on the surface of the ground, or over the sepulchral mound; the Trolchs who light the Grave-fire, the Moon of the grave, and the warden spirits who wrap the dungeon tower of the castle of Kufstein in lambent fire.

When the northern aurora beamed through the sky, the Scandinavians hailed the "holy light:" as it is yet called in Norway; for they believed that it announced the approach of the Valkyrs, the maids of slaughter, proceeding from Valhalla to summon the warrior to the feast of Odin. But the Christian chronicler saw fiery armies, flaming spears and blazing swords in the splendid stream, and was appalled by the portentous illumination. A new guise was given to every vestige of the ancient faith, though the terrors which had once surrounded the King of gods and men still retained their influence long after his empire vanished before the converting swords of Charlemagne and Haco. An unwilling renunciation of the Deity of war was extorted from the Saxon; and it was a day of grief to him when, in the words of the old confession of faith, he was compelled to forsake "all the devil's works and all the devil's words, the Thunderer, and Wodin, and the Saxon Odin, and all the fiends who be their feres." The kneeling catechumen repeated an insincere confession; yet a distinct recollection remained of the warlike faith of their ancestors, nor did they doubt the existence of the Demon god. Hence the peasants still tremble when the murky air resounds with the baying of the hounds, and when the steeds holding their course between earth and heaven are heard to rush amongst the clouds, announcing the approach of the Wild Huntsman.

The origin of the name of Woden or Odin is to be traced to a root existing in the Anglo-Saxon: it signifies the "wild" or "furious one." This etymology would alone indicate the connexion between the "Wütend heer" or "wild army," as the Wild Huntsman and his train are popularly called, and the God. But in some parts of Germany the denominations "Grodens heer," and "Wodens heer," are also current. Woden is known in Brunswick as the hunter *Hackelberg*, a sinful knight, who renounced his share of the joys of heaven on condition that he might be allowed to hunt until the day of doom. They show his sepulchre in a forest near Usslar. It is a vast unhewn stone, an ancient monument of the class which, for want of a better name, we call druidical. This circumstance is of importance in confirming the connexion between the popular mythology and the ancient religion of the country. According to the peasants, this grave-stone is watched by the dogs of hell, which constantly crouch upon it. In the year 1558, Hans Kirchof had the ill luck to wander to it; he discovered it by chance, for no one can reach *Hackelberg's* tomb if he journeys to the forest with the express intent of finding it. Hans relates, that, to his great astonishment, he did not see the dogs, although he confesses that he had not a hair on his head that did not stand on end.

All is quiet about the grave of *Hackelberg*; but the restless spirit retains his power at this very moment in the neighbourhood of the *Odin Wald*, or the forest of *Odin*, and amidst the ruins of the old baronial castle of the *Rodenstein* family. His appearance still prognosticates impending war. At midnight he issues from the tower, surrounded by his host: the trumpets sound, the warwains rumble, the drums beat, and even the words of command are heard which are given to the ghostly soldiery by their leader. When peace is about to be concluded, *Rodenstein* and his soldiery return to the ruins, but with quiet and gentle steps, and borne along with harmony. *Rodenstein* will come when he is called. About four or five years ago, a *Jäger*, in the employ of a neighbouring forester, who, when in England, stated the fact to us, passed by the tower at midnight. Being some-

what the better for his potations, he called to the spirit—*Rodenstein*, ziehe heraus!—and instantly the army rushed forth with such violence, that the presumptuous huntsman was nearly frightened out of his senses.

According to the mythology of Scandinavia, the power of death is given to *HELA*, who rules the nine worlds of *Nifleheim*. Concealment is implied by this name. According to the popular belief of the Cimbrie peasants, she spreads plague and pestilence, and diffuses all evil whilst she rides by night on the three-footed horse of hell (*Helhest*). *Hela* and the war-wolves retained their empire in Normandy, although, after the Northmen of *Hastings* became the Normans of *Rollo*, they seem to have lost the memory of their ancient superstitions as rapidly as they forgot their northern tongue. From *Hela* was generated *HELLEQUIN*; a name in which, under the disguise of romance orthography, we can have no difficulty in recognizing *HELA-KIÖN*, the race of *Hela*; it was those whom *Richard Fearnought*, duke of Normandy, the son of *Robert the Devil*, encountered hunting and reveling in the forest. As the romance tells, *Hellequin* was a knight who wasted his gold in the wars which *Charles Martel* waged against the heathen Saracens. When the wars were ended, he and his lineage, not having wherewithal to sustain themselves, took to wicked courses. They spared neither virgin, nor widow, nor orphan; and the sufferers cried out to heaven for vengeance. When matters had come to this pass, it chanced that *Hellequin* fell sick, and died, and was in fearful danger of condemnation; but the good works which he had performed by waging war against the heathen Saracens availed him; and it was allotted as a penance to him and his lineage, that, dead as they were, they should wander by night throughout the world, in bitterness and toil.

But the wild huntsman was not confined to the woods of Normandy. In the year 1598, when *Henry IV.* was hunting in the forest of *Fontainebleau*, he suddenly heard the baying of hounds and the notes of the horn, seemingly at the distance of half a league from the spot where he was placed; but as suddenly these distant sounds were close

at hand. Henry ordered the the Earl of Soissons to prick forward. We gather from the context that he guessed that the sounds were supernatural. Soissons obeyed; and as he advanced, he still heard the noises, without being able to ascertain whence they proceeded; but a dark and gigantic figure appeared amongst the trees, and crying out "M'entendez-vous?" instantly vanished. This story is remarkable for many reasons. Father Matthieu, the Jesuit, relates it in his "*Histoire de France et des Choses mémorables advenues durant sept années de paix du règne de Henry IV.*," a work published in the lifetime of that Monarch, to whom it is dedicated. Matthieu was well acquainted with Henry, from whom, if Father Daniel is to be trusted, he obtained much information. It has been supposed that the spectre was an assassin in disguise, and that the hand of Ravallac would have been anticipated if the good king himself had approached near enough to receive the dagger. Whatever the real nature of the apparition may have been, it seems that Henry did not wish that the story should be discredited. "Persons are not wanting," Matthieu concludes, "who would have ranked this adventure with the fables of Merlin and of Urganda, if the truth, as affirmed by so many eye-witnesses and ear-witnesses, had not removed all doubts. The shepherds of the neighbourhood say that it was a spirit, whom they call the *Grand Veneur*, who hunts in this forest; but they hold that it is the hunt of St. Hubert, which is also heard in other places." The spirit appeared not far from the entrance of the town, at a cross-road yet retaining the name of "*La Croix du Grand Veneur*."

In ages of romance, a romantic immortality has been bestowed by popular loyalty on those heroes who commanded the admiration as well as the fondness of their countrymen. Those who had seen their King flushed with victory and leading on his warriors, or enthroned in majesty and wisdom, were almost reluctant to admit that he too could die. The pious cares which saved the royal corpse from the insulting victor, the chance which caused it to fester undistinguished amongst the meaner dead, contributed to nourish the longing hope that the royal warrior had yet been

spared; and though withdrawn from mortal ken, they would believe, in the hour of suffering and distress, that he who had been the guardian of his people was still reserved on earth to fulfil a higher destiny. Greece revered her yet living Achilles in the white island; the Britons expected the awakening of Arthur entranced in Avalon; and almost in our days it was thought that Sebastian of Portugal would one day return and claim his usurped realms. Thus, also, the three founders of the Helvetic confederacy are thought to sleep in a cavern near the lake of Lucerne. The herdsmen call them the three Tells, and say that they lie in their antique garb, in quiet slumber; and when Switzerland is in her utmost need, they will awaken and regain the liberties of the land. **FREDERICK BARBAROSSA** has obtained the same wild veneration. He was a monarch of extraordinary intellect. Anathematized as the enemy of the papal see, he was thought to favour the faith of Mahomet; whilst some suspected that he acknowledged no other deity save his Star, his ruling Fate: yet he was wise and valiant, and commanded the respect of his warlike subjects. Frederick died in Apulia; he was the last sovereign of the Swabian dynasty; and so little was his death believed in the empire, that five impostors successively assumed his name, and obtained credit with those who were discontented with the reign of Rodolph of Hapsburg. The false Fredericks were successively unmasked and punished, yet the common people continued stubbornly to believe that Frederick was alive, and that he had warily and willingly abdicated the imperial crown. "He is a wise man," said they, "and can read the stars; he is travelling in distant regions with his astrologers and his trusty companions, to avoid the evils which would have been his lot, had he remained on the throne;" and yet they trusted that he would reappear when the good time should arrive. Obscure prophecies were circulated, which were even revived in the reign of Charles V., that Frederick was destined to unite the Eastern to the Western Empire. The Turks and heathens are to be defeated by his prowess in a dreadful battle near Cologne, and he is to regain the Holy

land. Until the appointed time shall come, the Emperor is secluded in the castle of Kyffhausen, in the Hercynian forest, where he remains in a state not much unlike the description which Cervantes has given of the inhabitants of the cavern of Montesinos: he slumbers on his throne, his red beard has grown through the stone table on which his right arm reclines, or, as some say, it has grown round and round it. A variation of the same fable, coloured according to its locality, is found in Denmark, where it is said that Holger Danske, whom the French romances call Ogier the Dane, slumbers in the vaults beneath Cronenburgh castle. A villain was once allured by splendid offers to descend into the cavern and visit the half torpid hero. Ogier muttered to the visitor, requesting him to stretch out his hand. The villain presented an iron crow to Ogier, who grasped it, indenting the metal with his fingers. "It is well!" quoth Ogier, who imagined that he was squeezing the hand of the stranger, and thus proving his strength and fortitude, "there are yet men in Denmark."

The Norman peasants believe that there is a flower which is called the *herbe maudite*—he who treads upon it continues walking round and round, imagining that he is proceeding onwards, though in fact he quits not the spot to which the magic root has bound him. This spell seems to binds us; for we find ourselves still in company with the goblins of the mine, whom we imagined we had left far behind us. The Emperor is, undoubtedly, to be identified with those capricious powers. In the middle ages the winning of these riches became the trade of those sages who are the prototypes of the Dousterswivel of our northern enchanter, and the employment of treasure-finding was a regular profession in the mining countries, where some traces of it still remain. Each of these adepts had his own mode of operating. One was the Theurgist; he prayed and fasted till the dream came upon him. He was a pious man, and his art was holy; and if the eager disciple sinned against faith or chastity, the inspiration fled, the treasure vanished.

Guilt, guilt, my son! give 't the right name: no marvel

If I found check in our great work within,
When such affairs as these were managing.

The natural magician smiled at the mystical devotee, whom he affected to treat either as the dupe of his own enthusiasm, or as an impostor. Trusting only to the secret powers of nature, he paced along with the divining rod of hazel, which turns in obedience, attracted by the effluvia from the metals concealed beneath the soil. These are delusions, thought a bolder sage who had been instructed in the secrets of Cornelius Agrippa: and he opened the sealed book which taught him to charm the mirror, in which were seen all things, however distant or hidden from mortal view, and he buried it by the side of the cross-road, where the carcass of the murderer was wasting on the wheel, or he opened the newly made grave and caused the eyes of the troubled corpse to shed their glare upon the surface of the polished crystal. Telesms and pentacles, and constellated idols also lent their aid. Such were the implements of art belonging to an Italian or Spanish Cabalist.—We give the story as it was related to us many years ago by a right learned adept.—This Cabalist ascertained that if he could procure a certain golden medal, to be worked into the shape of a winged man when the planets were in a proper aspect, the figure so formed would discover all secret treasures. After great pains, he was so fortunate as to obtain the talisman, which he confided to a workman, who gradually hammered the metal into the astral form, using his tools only at those moments when the Master, consulting the Alfonsine tables, desired him to proceed. It happened that the smith was left alone, with the statue when it was nearly finished, and a sudden thought, inspired by his good genius, induced him to give the last stroke to the magical image. His hand fell in the right ascension of the planets; the virtue was imparted, and the statue instantly leaped from the table, and fixed itself firmly on the floor. No effort of the goldsmith could remove it; but as he guessed rightly of the nature of the attractive influence, he dug up the pavement, under which he discovered an earthen vessel full of

coin, which had been concealed by some former owner of the mansion. Who could be more rejoiced than our goldsmith? Destiny had gifted him with the means of becoming the master of all the secret treasures of the earth. He instantly resolved to appropriate the inestimable talisman to himself; and, to evade pursuit, he embarked in a ship which was then setting sail. The wind blew briskly and favourably, and in a short time they were out at sea; when the ship sailed over a treasure concealed in the caverns of the deep. The talisman obeyed its call: it sprang from the hand of its astonished owner, and, with all his hopes, was lost for ever beneath the waves.

Wretchedness, disappointment, and delusion thus invariably conclude the mystic or legendary narrations, in which human avarice is represented as yearning after gold, and attempting to wrest it from heaven or from hell. If the gift is bestowed, it becomes a glittering curse; but oftener it is denied, and Fate tantalizes the eagerness of humanity. When the Arab searches the ruined temple, the chest of stone sinks lower and lower beneath the soil. The rocks fall in and bury the treasure just when his charm is about to take; if the cavern opens before the suffumigations of the sorcerer, the treasure vanishes from his grasp. The moral is as obvious as the source of the myths, in which we again observe the varied sway of the good and of the evil.

Our subject is far from being exhausted; but our readers, perhaps, have already begun to suspect that we betray a greater degree of fondness for the superstitions of a rude and barbarous age than is altogether consistent with the good sense and information for which, without doubt, they are willing to give us credit. We frankly acknowledge, that the perusal of Piccatrix and Cornelius Agrippa, of Delrio and Remigius, of Glanvill and Sinclair, has amused us during many an idle hour, and solaced us during many a weary one; and, in justification of our taste, it may not be improper to observe, that the "superstitions of the middle ages" are worthy of a more minute, and, we may add, a more philosophic and impartial investigation than they have hitherto obtained.

If the Fays sporting on the wold, or the Demons bursting from their prison-house, are considered merely as allowable subjects for the lay of the poet, and which his old charter of fiction authorises him to use with freedom, an inaccurate standard is assigned to the worth of popular mythology. So far as the idlest tales are believed and credited, they are facts; and it is as facts they are to be studied. Poetic talent may give a graceful form to the spirit, who is uncouth in the fancy of the churl, but the essence and import of the airy being remain unchanged. And the whole creed of popular superstition is linked in the esoteric history of mankind, which is, perhaps, more instructive than the relation of the rise and fall of empires. This is equally the case with the occult sciences, as they are usually termed. Scarcely two centuries have elapsed since the whole category of magical and cabalistic and theosophic mysteries entered into the real business of life, and these falacious pursuits were associated with severe and specious learning. Exorcisms were chanted by the priest; and, arrayed in his stole, or even in his surplice, it oft became dubious whether the rites of the church were not assimilated by him to the forbidden arts of sorcery. The astrologer was honoured in the presence-chamber of the prince. Denounced by the preacher and consigned to the flames by the bench, the Wizard received secret service money from the cabinet, for the purpose of destroying the hostile armament, as it sailed before the wind. And the Senate quailed with fear at the recital of plots and conspiracies, when it was disclosed how traitors sought to shorten the days of the monarch and overturn the state by tormenting waxen images with needles, or burying them with their heads downwards.

(To be continued.)

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NO. IV.—FIRST INCARNATION OF VISHNU, UNDER THE FORM OF A FISH.*



The first incarnation of Vishnu, or the Matsya or Fish Avatar, is described in the Bhagavat, a sacred book of the Hindoos, and forms the subject of the first Purana. We are indebted to Sir William Jones for the following translation, which may be looked upon as the very best extant. It will be observed that this name Heri is employed when speaking of Vishnu.

Desiring the preservation of herds, and of Brahmans, of genii and virtuous men, of the Vedas, of law, and of precious things, the lord of the universe assumes many bodily shapes; but, though he pervades, like the air, a variety of beings, yet he is himself unvaried, since he has no quality subject to change. At the close of the last Calpa, there was a general destruction occasioned by the sleep of Brahma; whence his creatures in different worlds were drowned in a vast ocean. Brahma, being inclined to slumber, desiring a repose after a lapse of ages, the strong

demon Hayagriva came near him, and stole the Vedas, which had flowed from his lips. When Heri, the preserver of the universe, discovered this deed of the prince of Danavas, he took the shape of a minute fish, called sap'hari. A holy king, named Satyavrata, then reigned; a servant of the spirit, which moved on the waves, and so devout, that water was his only sustenance. He was the child of the Sun, and, in the present Calpa, is invested by Narayan in the office of Menu, by the name of Sraddhadeva, or the God of Obsequies. One day, as he was making a libation in the river Critamala, and held water in the palm of his hand, he perceived a small fish moving in it. The king of Dravira immediately dropped the fish into the river together with the water, which he had taken from it; when the sap'hari thus pathetically addressed the benevolent monarch: "How canst thou, O king, who showest affection to the oppressed, leave me in this river-water, where I am too weak to resist the monsters of the stream who fill me with dread?" He, not knowing who had assumed the form of a fish, applied his mind to the preservation of the sap'hari, both from good nature and from regard to his own soul; and, having heard its very suppliant address, he kindly placed it under his protection in a small vase full of water; but, in a single night, its bulk was so increased, that it could not be contained in the jar, and thus again addressed the illustrious prince: "I am not pleased with living miserably in this little vase;

* The above article is extracted from the First Volume of the Asiatic Researches.

"make me a large mansion, where I may dwell in comfort." The king, removing it thence, placed it in the water of a cistern; but it grew three cubits in less than fifty minutes, and said, "O king, it pleases me not to stay vainly in this narrow cistern: since thou hast granted me an asylum, give me a spacious habitation." He then removed it, and placed it in a pool, where, having ample space around its body, it became a fish of considerable size. "This abode, O king, is not convenient for me, who must swim at large in the waters: exert thyself for my safety; and remove me to a deep lake." Thus addressed, the pious monarch threw the suppliant into a lake, and, when it grew of equal bulk with that piece of water, he cast the vast fish into the sea. When the fish was thrown into the waves, he thus again spoke to Satyavrata: "Here the horned sharks, and other monsters of great strength, will devour me; thou shouldst not, O valiant man, leave me in this ocean." Thus repeatedly deluded by the fish, who had addressed him with gentle words, the king said, "Who art thou, that beguilest me in that assumed shape? Never before have I seen or heard of so prodigious an inhabitant of the waters, who, like thee, hast filled up, in a single day, a lake an hundred leagues in circumference. Surely, thou art Bhagavat, who appeared before me; the great Heri, whose dwelling was on the waves; and who now, in compassion to thy servants, bearest the form of the natives of the deep. Salutation and praise to thee, O first male, the lord of creation, of preservation, of destruction! Thou art the highest object, O supreme ruler, of us thy adorers, who piously seek thee. All thy delusive deesents in this world give existence to various beings: yet I am anxious to know for what cause that shape has been assumed by thee. Let me not, O lotos eyed, approach in vain the feet of a deity, whose perfect benevolence has been extended to all; when thou hast shown us to our amazement, the appearance of other bodies, not in reality existing, but successively exhibited." The lord of the universe, loving the pious man, who thus implored him, and intending to preserve him from the sea of destruction, caused by the depravity of the age, thus told him how

he was to act. "In seven days from the present time, O thou tamer of enemies, the three worlds will be plunged in an ocean of death; but, in the midst of the destroying waves, a large vessel, sent by me for thy use, shall stand before thee. Then shalt thou take all medicinal herbs, all the variety of seeds; and, accompanied by seven saints, encircled by pairs of all brute animals, thou shalt enter the spacious ark, and continue in it, secure from the flood, on one immense ocean without light, except the radiance of thy holy companions. When the ship shall be agitated by an impetuous wind, thou shalt fasten it with a large sea-serpent on my horn; for I will be near thee; drawing the vessel, with thee and thy attendants. I will remain on the ocean, O chief of men, until a night of Brahma shall be completely ended. Thou shalt then know my true greatness, rightly named the supreme god-head; by my favour, all thy questions shall be answered, and thy mind abundantly instructed." Heri, having thus directed the monarch, disappeared; and Satyavrata humbly waited for the time which the ruler of our senses had appointed. The pious king, having scattered towards the east the pointed blades of the grass darbha, and turning his face toward the north, sat meditating on the feet of the God, who had borne the form of fish. The sea, overwhelming its shores, deluged the whole earth; and it was soon perceived to be augmented by showers from immense clouds. He, still meditating on the command of Bhagavat, saw the vessel advancing, and entered it with the chiefs of Brahmans, having carried into it the medicinal creepers, and conformed to the directions of Heri. The saints thus addressed him: "O king, meditate on Cesava; who will, surely, deliver us from this danger, and grant us prosperity." The God, being invoked by the monarch, appeared again distinctly on the vast ocean in the form of a fish, blazing like gold, extending a million of leagues, with one stupendous horn; on which the king as he had before been commanded by Heri, tied the ship with a cable made of a vast serpent, and, happy in his preservation, stood praising the destroyer of Madhu. When the monarch had finish-

ed his hymn, the primeval male, Bhagavat, who watched for his safety on the greater expanse of water, spoke aloud to his own divine essence, pronouncing a sacred purana, which contained the rules of the Sanchya philosophy: but it was an infinite mystery to be concealed within the breast of Satyavrata; who, sitting in the vessel with the saints, heard the principle of the soul, the external being, proclaimed by the preserving power. Then Heri, rising together with Brahma, from the destructive deluge, which was abated, slew the demon Hayagriva, and recovered the sacred books. Satyavrata, instructed in all divine and human knowledge, was appointed in the present Calpa, by the favour of Vishnu, the seventh Menu, surnamed Vaivaswata: but the appearance of a horned fish to the religious monarch was Maya, or delusion; and he who shall devoutly hear this important allegorical narrative, will be delivered from the bondage of sin.

It will appear evident to the reader, that the foregoing bears a great resemblance in many particulars to the Noachian deluge. In all likelihood, the Jews acquired this tradition from India through Chaldea, and dressed it up to suit their own particular whims and fancies. Sir William Jones, Maurice, and others, endeavour to make it out that the Hindoos must have borrowed from the Jewish account; but the admitted great antiquity and learning of Hindostan, and the illiterate and obscure character of the Jews, render such a supposition opposed to all rational probability. When we have described the first four Avatars, all of which appear linked together in many essential particulars, and all held by the orthodox to refer to the one event of Noah's Deluge, we shall discuss this subject at greater length, and endeavour to give what appears to us the most reasonable interpretation of these ancient fables.

POPULAR MYTHOLOGY OF THE MIDDLE AGES (*concluded*).

In no rank of society were these hallucinations discredited or discouraged. A gloomy mist of credulity enwrapped the cathedral and the hall of justice, the cottage and the throne; and no mortal eye could discern the witchery of the visions in which all believed so strangely. Baseless as they are, they acquire an effective value, when we place ourselves in the era to which they belong; for an error which prevails universally, no one having the will or the ability to disprove it, has quite as much weight in human societies as a truth which cannot be refuted. Nor is it now an unprofitable or useless task to recal the memory of the fleeting pageant. If we wish to ascertain the strength of the human mind, we must begin our trial by searching out its weakness. Most faithful of all others is that warning which is given to the judgment, when it is compelled to bend back upon itself, and to dwell on the contemplation of its own follies. On the chart of the careful navigator are marked the banks of fog and vapour, which caused him to divert his helm from the course which he ought to have

pursued, and which inspired him with vain hope or with groundless terror; inducing him to believe in the existence of happy islands, in climates where there is nought but the waste bosom of the ocean, or to dread the craggy rocks and dangerous shoals, though the billows roll on in unbroken flow. And the delineation of these unreal lands will prove as useful to the future sailor as the bearings of the firmest shores, for they apprise him of the deceit to which he may be exposed. Our vessel is built with greater science than the gorgeous though inartificial galliot of ancient days. The loadstone guides us unerringly when the load-star is lost in clouds; yet still we are destined to be tossed upon the waters, and to wander from the harbour which, fruitlessly, we strive to gain. Doubt ought still to be our companion even when we flatter ourselves that we have attained to certainty: because we have not yet learned to know ourselves, or to distrust our inborn frailty. Though neither cheered by the apparition of protecting spirits, nor fearing the enmity of the goblin or the demon, we are still as liable, as of

old, to be seduced by our own delusions.

Confidence, rather than humility, is now abounding, when an estimation is put upon the character of our times. It is the common boast, that the present age, our age, the age we live in, is a period of enlightened philosophy.—The words so employed mean, in fact, that we who use them are enlightened philosophers; but let that pass.—And when it becomes necessary to make good our title to the praise which we demand, we usually bless ourselves, and expatiate with much complacency in comparing the modern advances in “arts and sciences” and philosophy with the rudeness and barbarity of the dark ages. At the first thought, it is not easy to avoid sharing in such sentiments. We find that the inheritance of falsehood, once peculiarly the portion of our forefathers, has not descended to us. Opinions were received by them, which are now known to be preposterous by the least informed. They were obstinate in the propagation of absurdities which we have abandoned; zealous in defending the misbegotten offspring of doting ignorance, whose deformity is now universally recognized. Struck by the contrast, and valuing, sometimes overvaluing, the advantages which we unquestionably enjoy, our triumph appears confirmed. Pointing to the steam-engine and the printing-press, the telescope and the barometer, we bestow gentle pity upon the ignorance of those who are sleeping in the grave, whilst we condemn and despise the errors which they committed. Yet if their demerits are compared with ours, we may perhaps pause before we confirm ourselves in the belief of our relative superiority. We have refused to adopt the innumerable false and foolish doctrines to which the mind was formerly subjected; another modification is now given to the follies and errors which owe their birth to the same generating cause, but they are still equally repudiated by common sense, and by the dictates of sound reason: and the rejection of ancient follies and errors has been effected, so far at least as the great multitude concerned in the rejection,

rather by the mighty revolution which has been brought about in our ideas and in our manners, than by any real amelioration in the intellect of the many-headed monster.

It would not be a difficult task to raise up a modern counterpart which should grin and mow at every ancient folly; but inferences might be drawn from the array, which would be wholly contrary to our intent. Such comparisons would not be presented for the silly and heartless purpose of ministering to malice or scoffing at individual character. Let it not be supposed that they would be drawn in a spirit of sarcasm or satire, or result from a sullen insensibility to the blessings of knowledge and civilization. On the contrary, they are such as ever force themselves upon the judgment of those who are most anxious to witness the true advancement of their fellow-creatures, and to honour the great men who have been appointed to the task of leading mankind onwards in the noble path of intellectual improvement; and who, entertaining such sentiments, fear at the same time that a presumptuous estimation of the superiority which we certainly enjoy over our predecessors, may tend to foster sentiments which, if not vicious, are yet so unlike virtues, that knowledge becomes less desirable when allied to them. It is hardly a paradox to maintain that we may become uncharitable and spiteful in our treatment of our contemporaries in consequence of our scornful triumphs over the credulity of Albertus Magnus or Roger Bacon, and that by despising the ignorance of past times we crush the germ of real amelioration. Sir Thomas Brown, who stood upon the isthmus which divides us from them, has thus pointed out the main cause of their errors. “The mortallest enemy unto knowledge, that which hath done the greatest execution upon truth, hath been a peremptory adhesion to authority, and more especially the establishing of our belief upon the dictates of antiquity. For, as every capacity may observe, most men of ages present so superstitiously do look on ages past, that the authority of the one exceeds the reasons of the other.”

THE ORIGIN AND INTERPRETATIONS OF THE HINDOO RELIGION.*

The Hindoo religion appears to me to have been originally a reform of existing systems, when the arts and sciences had arrived at a degree of perfection; that it was intended to correct the ferociousness and corruption of the times, and to reduce mankind to an artificial order on a firmer base of polity; that it was the united effort of a society of sages, who retained the priesthood to themselves, and rendered it hereditary in their families, by the division of the people into separate casts; that it was supported by the regal authority, which, while it controlled, it supported in return: that it was promulgated in all its perfection at once as a revelation of high antiquity, to stamp its decrees with greater authority; and that it was founded on pure Deism, of which the Gayatri, translated by Sir William Jones, is a striking proof; but to comply with the gross ideas of the multitude, who required a visible object of their devotion, they personified the three great attributes of the deity.

The first founders of the Hindu religion do not appear to have had the intention of bewildering their followers with metaphysical definitions; their description of the deity was confined to those attributes which the wonders of the creation so loudly attest: his almighty power to create; his providence to preserve; and his power to annihilate or change what he has created.

In fact, no idea of the deity can be formed beyond this: it is simple, but it forces conviction upon the mind. This simplicity, however, was destroyed when they attempted to describe these attributes to the eye by hieroglyphics; perhaps letters had not then been invented, in which case they could have no other mode of instruction than by signs and emblematical figures.

In order to impress on the minds of men a sense of their total and absolute dependence on him, by whom they live, and from whom they have their being, they invented the hieroglyphical figures of

BRAHMA,	VISHNU,	SIVA.
Creation,	As emblematical of Preservation,	Destruction.
Matter,	These are referred to Space,	Time.
Red,	And painted them Blue,	White.
<i>To represent substance.</i>	<i>To represent the apparent colour of space.</i>	<i>In contrast to the black night of eternity.</i>

Brahma* had originally five heads, alluding to the five elements; hence in one of the forms given to Siva, as the Creator, he is likewise represented with five heads. But the introduction of images soon led the mass of mankind to consider these personified attributes as real distinct personages; and as one error brings with it many others in its train, men separated into sects, each selecting one of the triad, the particular object of their devotion, in preference to, and exclusive of the others; the followers of Vishnu and Siva invented new symbols, each to ascribe to their respective divinity the attribute of creation. This contention for pre-eminence ended in the total suppression of the worship of Brahma, and the temporary submission of Vishnu to the superiority of Siva; but this did not last long; the sects raised crusades against each other; hordes of armed fanatics, under the titles of Sannyasis and Vairagis, enlisted themselves as champions of their respective faith; the former devoted their lives in support of the superiority of Siva, and the latter were no less zealous for the rights of Vishnu: alternate victory and defeat marked the progress of a religious war, which for ages continued to harass the earth, and inflame mankind against each other.

Plutarch has said of the Egyptians, that they had inserted nothing into their worship without a reason, nothing merely fabulous, nothing superstitious (as many suppose); but their institutions have either a reference to morals, or to something useful in life; and many of them bear a beautiful resemblance of some facts in history, or some appearance in nature; perhaps in the commencement to lead mankind into

* The above article is taken from the Eighth Volume of the Asiatic Researches.

superstition was not intended nor foreseen; it is a weed that springs up naturally when religion is blended with mystery, and burdened with perplexing ceremonials. The mass of mankind lost sight of morality in the multiplicity of rites; and as it is easier to practise ceremonies than to subdue the passions, ceremonies gradually become substitutes for real religion, and usurp the place of morality and virtue.

This seems to have been the case with the religions of Egypt and India.

In the course of investigating the ceremonies of the Hindus, and in attempting to develop their meaning, it will be found necessary to compare them with the ceremonies and rites of Egypt: the resemblance is striking; they mutually serve to explain each other; and leave no doubt in my mind of their connexion or rather identity.

The annihilation of the sect and worship of Brahma, as the Iswara or supreme lord, is allegorically described in the *Casichand* of the *Scanda Puran*, where the three powers are mentioned as contending for precedence. Vishnu, at last, acknowledges the superiority of Siva; but Brahma, on account of his presumptuous obstinacy and pride, had one of his heads cut off by Siva, and his *pouja* abolished.

The intent of this fable is evidently to magnify the sect of Siva above those of Brahma and Vishnu; and if, instead of the *Devatas* themselves, (who are described as the actors in this allegorical drama,) we substitute the contending sects, the fable will appear not destitute of foundation in historical fact.

Of the Vahans, or Vehicles of the Gods.

When the symbolical worship was introduced, the vehicles of the new deities were necessarily allegorical: the *Vahans* of the three supreme personified attributes were purity, truth, and justice; the first was typified by the Swan, which, clothed with unspotted whiteness, swims amidst the waters, as it were distinct from, and unsullied by them, as the truly pure mind remains untainted amidst the surrounding temptations of the world.

Garuda and Aruna are two brothers, the one remarkable for his strength and swiftness, the other (Aruna) is described

as imperfect, and, on account of his defects, destined to act as charioteer to the Sun. Aruna is the dawn, the morning twilight, which precedes the Sun: Garuda is perfect light, the dazzling full blaze of day, the type of truth, the celestial *Vahan* of Vishnu.

Justice, typified in the sacred bull, is the *Vahan* of Siva. The Bull, whose body is *Parameswara*, and whose every joint is a virtue; whose three horns are the three *Védas*; whose tail ends where *Adherma*, or injustice begins.

Of Osiris, Horus, Typhon, and Brahma, Vishnu, and Siva.

If we consider the Egyptian Osiris not as a name, but as a title of supremacy, which each sect, as their doctrines became in turn the established religion of the country, applied exclusively to the object of their worship; and if we consider it as the same with the Sanscrit Iswara (the Supreme Lord,) it will greatly illustrate the identity of the religions of Egypt and Hindostan, by a close coincidence of historical fact. The three great attributes of the deity had in course of time been erected into distinct deities, and mankind had divided into sects, some attaching themselves to Brahma, some to Vishnu, and others to Siva. The contention of schismatics from the same stock, is always more inveterate than where the difference is total, the sect of Brahma claimed exclusive pre-eminence for the object of their choice, as being the creative power, the Iswara, or Supreme Lord. The other two sects joined against the followers of Brahma, and obtained so complete a victory as to abolish totally that worship; the sect of Siva being the most powerful, rendered theirs the established religion, and claimed for Siva, in his turn, the exclusive title of Iswara. The sect of Vishnu, or Heri, at length emerged from its obscurity, and, in concert with the followers of the Sacti, or female power, destroyed and abolished the sect and worship of Siva; thus Vishnu, or Heri, became the Iswara, and his worship the established religion. This seems to have been the case in Egypt; for, if we substitute the name of Osiris for Brahma, Horus for Vishnu or Heri, Typhon for Siva, and Isis for the female principle, the history agrees in all its

parts. A proof of the identity of Siva and Typhon is the title of Babon. Mr. Bryant says, that "Babon was thought to have been the same as Typhon, by some esteemed a female, and the wife of that personage." One of the titles of Siva is Bhuvan, or rather Bhuvan-Iswara, the Lord of the Universe; his consort, in this character, is styled Bhuvan-Iswari, which may have occasioned the uncertainty mentioned by Mr. Bryant, with respect to the sex of that deity, since Bhuvan (world,) or the Universe, is a part of the title of either.

The Sun is one of the forms of Heri, or Vishnu; Osiris and Horus are both supposed to have been the Sun. The Indian expedition of Osiris coincides with the adventures of Rama, one of the incarnations of Vishnu. The four months' sleep of Horus tallies with the four months' sleep of Vishnu.

The sacred Bull, the vehicle of Siva, was the emblem of justice, and peculiarly sacred to him amongst the Indians; and the living animal itself was venerated at Memphis and Thebes, under the names of Apis and Mnevis. The Phallos of Osiris was an object of worship, and it is known to be the hieroglyphic of Siva; and lastly, Osiris, like Brahma, is described as a great lawgiver.

If the conjecture I have set out with in this article, be considered with attention, it will account for the mixed character of the Grecian Bacchus.

The word Sura in Sanscrit signifies both wine and true wealth; hence in the first Chand of the Ramayan of Valmic it is expressly said, that the Devatas, having received the Sura, acquired the title of Suras, and the Daityas that of Asura from not having received it. The Veda is represented as that wine and true wealth; and the Devatas as enjoying it in a superior degree, being termed Suras: the prince, or supreme leader of the Saras, became in the Grecian Deity (by a confined translation of the word,) the god of wine and drunkards.

Bacchus, or Osiris, was represented by an equilateral triangle; Siva has the same hieroglyphic; the worship of Bacchus was the same as that which was paid to Siva; it had the same obscenities, the same bloody rites, and

the same emblem of the generative power.

In Bacchus may be traced the characteristics of each of the personages in the Indian triad; and this may be accounted for by supposing the Greeks to have been deceived by the tile Osiris; they, considering it as the name of an individual, mingled the characters and adventures of all the three in one personage. Bacchus may possibly be derived from a title of Vrihaspati, Vag-Isa, the lord of speech, which might be applied to Brahma as the husband of Saraswati, the goddess of speech. The Greeks called him Bromios, as Sir William Jones says, without knowing why; and he was styled by the Romans, Bruma: his feasts were celebrated for several days at the winter solstice; from him they were called Brumalia, and the winter solstice itself Bruma.

The crescent of Siva may have suggested the horns of Bacchus; and his army of Satyrs, and victories in India, show the resemblance of this part of his character to Vishnu as Rama, who, with his army of monkies, overran the peninsula of India.

It was a common practice with the Greeks to disguise their own ignorance of the purport of a foreign word, by supplying a word of a similar sound, but different meaning, in their own language, and inventing a story to agree with it; thus Meru, or the north pole, the supposed abode of the Devatas, being considered as the birth-place of the God, gave rise to the fable of Bacchus's second birth from the thigh of Jupiter, because Meros, a Greek word approaching Meru in sound, signifies the thigh in that language. Siva is described as taking the form of a Sinh, in the battle of Durga and Mahishasura; he seizes the monster with his claws and teeth, and overthrows him, while Durga, with her spear, finishes the conquest by his death. Thus Bacchus, under the same form, is described as destroying the giant Rhæcus.

The Hindoo sacrifices to Durga and Cali resemble those of Bacchus. When the stroke is given, which severs the head of the victim from its body, the cymbals strike up, the Sancha or Buccinum is blown, and the whole assembly, shouting, besmear their faces with the blood; they roll themselves in it, and,

dancing like demoniacs, accompany their dances with obscene songs and gestures. The Abbe Pluche mentions the same particulars of the assistants in the sacrifices of Bacchus. The winnowing fan, the

Mystica vannus iacchi,

is always used in the rites of Cal, Cali, and Durga; but the Hindoos at present affix no other idea of mystery to it, than its being an appendage to husbandry; they use it as a tray, on which they place, before the image of the Deity, the Sesamum or Til, the Munder, with its lamp, and all the other articles used in the ceremony. A tray could serve the purpose; but on all solemnities the rituals prescribe exclusively the use of this van or fan, which they call Surp.

Of Vishnu, as the Creative Power.

The Vaishnavas, in order to appropriate the creative principle to Vishnu, make Brahma, whom they acknowledge as the immediate agent of creation, to derive his origin from a Lotos, which sprang out of the navel of Vishnu whilst sleeping upon the vast abyss of primeval waters; thus Vishnu becomes superior to Brahma, as being the cause, first, of his existence, and secondly, of all created things through his agency. The Argha is a vessel of copper used by the Brahmans in their puja; its shape is intended to represent the universal mother, but in the centre of it is an oval rising embossed, and by this the Vaishnavas assert, is meant the navel of Vishnu, from which all things originally sprang; and by the mystic union of these two principles of production, it is intended to describe them as identically one. The Saivas, however, insist, that this Omphalic rising is meant as the emblem of the Ling; hence Siva's title of Arghanath, and in the Agama, Argha-Isa, both meaning the Lord of the sacred vessel Argha.

Vishnu is represented, in the tenth Avatar, as the destroying power, thus ascribing to him the attribute of Siva.

(To be Continued.)

New Liberal Periodical.

On Saturday, November 12th, will be published, No. 1, price Twopence, (to be continued weekly,) of

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A JOURNAL OF THEOLOGICAL, MORAL, AND POLITICAL DISCUSSION.

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THE WORLD'S PANTHEON; OR, THE PICTURE GALLERY OF SUPERSTITION.

NO. V.—THE COURMA AVATAR, OR SECOND INCARNATION OF VISHNU IN THE FORM OF A TORTOISE, TO SUPPORT THE EARTH AFTER ITS EMERSION FROM THE OCEAN.



We insert the following description of the translation of the Courma Avatar, translated by Mr. Wilkins, from the Mahabharat, a sacred book of the Hindoos.

The Soors, or good genii, being assembled in solemn consultation upon the sparkling summit of the great golden mountain Meru, or Sommeir, asserted, in the Geographical Dissertation, to be situated in the centre of our globe, and to be of the altitude of at least 16,000 yojans, were meditating the discovery of the Amreeta, or water of immortality, under which allegory is shadowed out the reanimation of nature, after the general desolation made by the deluge. The sea was to be deeply agitated by the impetuous rotation of the mountain Mandar; but, as the united bands of Dewtahs were unable

to remove this mountain, they went before Vishnu, who was sitting with Brahma, and addressed them in these words: "Exert, sovereign beings, your most superior wisdom to remove the mountain Mandar, and employ your utmost power for our good." Vishnu and Brahma having replied, "It shall be according to your wish:" He, with the lotos eye, directed the king of serpents to appear. Ananta arose, and was instructed in that work by Brahma, and commanded by Narayen to perform it. Then Ananta, by his power, took up that king of mountains, together with all its forests and every inhabitant thereof, and the Soors accompanied him into the presence of the Ocean, whom they addressed, saying, "We will stir up thy waters to obtain the Amreeta:"—and the lord of the waters replied, "let me, also, have a share, seeing I am to bear the violent agitations that will be caused by the whirling of the mountain." Then the Soors and Assoors spake unto Courmarajah, the king of the tortoises, upon the strand of the ocean, and said, "my lord is able to be the supporter of this mountain." The tortoise replied, "be it so!" and it was placed upon his back.

"So the mountain being set upon the back of the tortoise, Eendra began to whirl it about as it were a machine. The mountain Mandar served as a churn, and the serpent Vasooke for the rope; and thus, in former days, did the Dewtahs, the Assoors, and the Danoos, begin to stir up the waters of the ocean for the discovery of the Amreeta. The mighty Assoors were employed on the side of the serpent's head, whilst all the Soors assembled about

* The yojan is an ancient Indian measure, in extent about four miles.

his tail. Ananta, that sovereign Dew, stood near Narayen.

"They now pull forth the serpent's head repeatedly, and as often let it go: while there issued from his mouth, thus violently drawing to and fro by the Soors and Assoors, a continual stream of fire, and smoke, and wind: *which ascending in thick clouds, replete with lightning, it began to rain down upon the heavenly bands, who were already fatigued with their labour, whilst a shower of flowers was shaken from the top of the mountain, covering the heads of all, both Soors and Assoors.* In the mean time *the roaring of the ocean, whilst violently agitated,* with the whirling of the mountain Mandar by the Soors and Assoors, was like the [bel-
lowing of a mighty cloud. Thousands of the various productions of the waters were torn to pieces by the mountain, and confounded with the briny flood; and every specific being of the deep, and all the inhabitants of the great abyss which is below the earth were annihilated; whilst, from the violent agitation of the mountain, the forest trees were dashed against each other, and precipitated from its utmost height, with all the birds thereon; from the violent conflagration of all which a raging (volcanic) fire was produced, involving the whole mountain with smoke and flame, as with a dark blue cloud and the vivid flash of lightning. The lion and the retreating elephant are overtaken by the devouring flames, and every vital being and every individual object are consumed in the general conflagration. The raging flames, thus spreading destruction on all sides, were at length quenched by a shower of cloud-borne water poured down by the immortal Eendra. And now a heterogeneous stream of the concocted juice of various trees and plants ran down into the briny flood. It was from this milk-like stream of juices, produced from those streams, trees, and plants, and a mixture of melted gold, that the Soors obtained their immortality.

The waters of the ocean, now being assimilated with those juices, were converted into milk, and from that milk a kind of butter was presently produced; when the heavenly bands

went again into the presence of Brahma, the granter of boons, and addressed him, saying—"Except Narayen, every other Soor and Assoor is fatigued with his labour, and still the Amreeta doth not appear; wherefore the churning of the ocean is at a stand." Then Brahma said unto Narayen—"Endue them with recruited strength, for thou art their support." And Narayen answered and said—"I will give fresh vigour to such as co-operate in the work. Let Mandar be whirled about, and the bed of the ocean be kept steady."

When they heard the words of Narayen, they all returned again to the work, and began to stir about with great force that butter of the ocean: when there presently arose from out of the troubled deep—first the moon, with a pleasing countenance, shining with ten thousand beams of gentle light; next followed Sree, the goddess of fortune, whose seat is the white lily of the waters; then Soora-Devee, the goddess of wine, and the white horse, called Oochisaravar. And after these there was produced, from the unctuous mass, the jewel Kowstoobh, that glorious sparkling gem worn by Narayen on his breast; then Parcejat, the tree of plenty, and Soorabhee, the cow that granted every heart's desire.

The moon, Soora-Devee, the goddess Sree, and the horse as swift as thought, instantly marched away towards the Dews, keeping in the path of the sun.

Then the Dew Dhanwantaree in human shape, came forth, holding in his hand a white vessel filled with the immortal juice Amreeta. When the Assoors beheld these wondrous things appear, they raised their tumultuous voices for the Amreeta, and each of them clamorously exclaimed—"This of right is mine!"

In the mean time Iravat, a mighty elephant, arose, now kept by the god of thunder; and as they continued to churn the ocean more than enough, that deadly poison issued from its bed, burning like a raging fire, whose dreadful fumes in a moment spread throughout the world, confounding the three regions of the universe with its mortal stench; until Seev, at the word of Brahma, swallowed the fatal drug to save mankind.

THE ORIGIN AND INTERPRETATIONS OF THE HINDOO RELIGION (continued.)

Vishnu* is represented by the Vaishnavas with four arms, and in each hand he bears a symbol. These symbols seem intended to unite the three great attributes in him, and to express his universal supremacy. The lotos typifies his creative power, (in allusion to the lotos which sprang from his navel). The Sancha typifies his attributes of preservation, and the mace that of destruction; while the Chacra expresses his universal supremacy, as Chacra-Varti, or lord of the Chacra, when applied to a monarch, indicates universal empire; applied to a Pundit, the possessor of the whole circle of science.

Of Siva, as the Creative Power, and Bhavani.
Of Cal and Cali.

When the personified attributes of the deity ceased to be considered as mere hieroglyphics; when mankind began to view them in the light of distinct persons, and attaching themselves to the worship of one or of the other exclusively, arranged themselves into sects, the worshippers of Siva introduced the doctrines of the eternity of matter. In order to reconcile the apparent contradiction of assigning the attribute of creation to the principle of destruction, they asserted, that the dissolution and destruction of bodies was not real, with respect to matter, which was indestructible itself, although its modifications were in a constant succession of mutation; that the power which continually operates these changes, must necessarily unite in itself the attributes of creation and apparent destruction; that this power, and matter, are two distinct and co-existent principles in nature: the one agent, the other patient; the one male, the other female: and that creation was the effect of the mystic union of these principles.

The hieroglyphic of this union was worshipped under a variety of names, Bhava and Bhavani, Mahadeva and Maha Maya, &c. Thus the attribute of creation was usurped from Brahma, by

the followers of Siva, to adorn and characterize their favourite deity.

This seems to have been a popular worship, for a great length of time. Two sects, however, sprang up out of it: the one personified the whole universe, and the dispensations of providence in the regulation thereof, into a goddess: this sect retained the female symbol only, and denominated themselves Sacta, as worshippers of the Sacti, or female power, exclusively, which they called Pracriti; and which we, from the Latin, term nature.

The other sect insisted that there was but one, eternal, first cause; that every thing existing, derived its existence from the sole energy of that first cause (Niranjen).

In order, therefore, to express their ideas of the absolute independence of this supreme power upon any extra co-operation, they took for their symbol the male emblem, unconnected with that of the female; a third sect likewise arose, which intended to reconcile the idea of the unity of godhead with that of the existence of matter and spirit; they, therefore, contended, that the union of those two principles was so mysteriously intimate as to form but one being, which they represented by a figure half male and half female, and denominated Hara-Gauri, and Ardhanari Iswara. It is probable that the idea of obscenity was not originally attached to these symbols; and it is likely, that the inventors themselves might not have foreseen the disorders which this worship would occasion amongst mankind. Profligacy eagerly embraces what flatters its propensities, and ignorance follows blindly wherever example excites; it is, therefore, no wonder that a general corruption of manners should ensue, increasing in proportion as the distance of time involved the original meaning of the symbol in darkness and oblivion. Obscene mirth became the principal feature of the popular superstition, and was, even in after times, extended to, and intermingled with, gloomy rites and bloody sacrifices. An heterogeneous mixture, which appears totally irreconcilable,

* See figure in No. 34. p. 261.
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unless by tracing the steps which led to it. It will appear that the ingrafting of a new symbol, upon the old superstition, occasioned this strange medley. The sect of Vishnu was not wholly free from the propensity of the times to obscene rights; it had been united in interest with that of Siva, in their league against the sect of Brahma, as was expressed by an image, called Har-Heri, half Siva and half Vishnu. This union seems to have continued till the time when an emblem of an extract idea, having been erected into an object of worship, introduced a revolution in religion, which had a violent and extended effect upon the manners and opinions of mankind.

It was then that a gloomy superstition arose, which spread its baneful influence with rapidity amongst mankind; which degraded the deity into an implacable tyrant; which filled its votaries with imaginary terrors; which prescribed dreadful rites; and exacted penances, mortifications, and expiatory sacrifices. In short, it was the worship of Cal and Cali, introduced by the sect of Siva, which caused a total separation of the sect of Vishnu, and introduced those religious wars which, in distant ages, seem to have distracted mankind: and of which traces are, even at this day, to be found.

With a view to unite the three great attributes of creation, preservation, and destruction in one symbol, the Saivas personified the abstract idea of time (Cal), which may, figuratively, be said to create, preserve and destroy. They, therefore, distinguished artificial time and eternity with peculiar emblems, in which the attribute of destruction, the characteristic of Siva, evidently predominates. The personified Sacti, or energy of each of these allegorical personages, was decorated with corresponding emblems. The contemplation of the distinctions of day and night; of the light and dark divisions of the month; of the six months night and six months day of the gods (occasioned by the apparent obliquity of the sun's path); and, lastly, the contrast of the visible creation with eternal night, suggested the idea of painting Cal white, and Cali black.

To Siva* they have given three eyes,

probably to denote his view of the three divisions of time, the past, the present and the future. A crescent on his forehead portrays the measure of time by the phases of the moon. A serpent forms a necklace to denote the measure of time by years. A second necklace, formed of human skulls, marks the lapse and revolution of ages, and the extinction and succession of the generations of mankind. He holds a trident in one hand, to show that the three great attributes are in him assembled and united. In the other hand is a kind of rattle, called damaru, shaped like an hour glass: I am inclined to think it was really, at first, intended as such: since it agrees with the character of the deity; and a sand gheri is mentioned, in the Sastra, as one of the modes of measuring time, and of ascertaining the length of a gheri.

In the hieroglyphic of the Maha Pralaya, (or grand consummation of all things, when time itself shall be no more,) he is represented as trodden under foot by Maha Cali, or eternity.

He is there deprived of his crescent, trident, and necklaces, to show that his dominion and powers are no more. He is blowing the tremendous horn, which announces the annihilation of all created beings.

Maha Cali, black and dreadful, is encompassed by symbols of destruction: two of her hands seem employed in the work of death: of the other two, one appears pointing downwards, alluding to the universal havoc which surrounds her: while the other, pointing upwards, seems to promise the regeneration of nature, by a new creation.

When the Sun begins his southern declination, the night of the gods begins: that is, when their supposed abode, Meru, (the north pole) begins to be involved in a night of six months: and, as this period may be considered as a type of Maha Pralaya, the worship of Maha Cali is celebrated at the commencement thereof.

Maha Cali is represented without a crescent, (the artificial measure of time,) because it is unnecessary to her character as the hieroglyphic of eternity. But the belief of the Hindoos in successive destructions and renovations of the universe, accounts for her wearing a Mund Mala, or necklace of skulls, as emblematical of those revolutions.

* See figure in No. 35.

Maha Cal, as represented in the caverns of Elephanta, had eight arms. In one hand he holds a human figure; in another a sword, or sacrificial axe; in a third he holds a bason of blood; and with a fourth he rings over it the sacrificial bell: two other arms are broken off; but with the two remaining he is drawing behind him a veil, which extinguishes the sun, and involves the whole universe in one undistinguished ruin. One of the titles of this tremendous deity is Bhairava, the horrific, but his principal designation is Cal Agni Rudra.

If the contemplation of the grand consummation of all created things struck the mind of the initiated Brahman with awe; the uninformed mass of people would not be less affected with the dreadful appearance and implacable character of this deity. To appease and reconcile so tremendous a being would naturally become an object of the greatest necessity and anxiety; the personified metaphor of all-devouring time, presented to their eyes a divinity delighting in blood and slaughter; the zeal of worshippers increased in proportion to their terrors. The unenlightened mind dwells with disturbed and anxious attention upon horrors of its own creation; and superstition takes its form and colour from the objects which excite it: hence arose those bloody rites, those consecrated cruelties, and those astonishing penances, which not only obtained in India, but pervaded almost every part of the ancient world. Thus a new superstition was grafted upon the old, as much adapted, by its vain terrors, to degrade the human mind, as the former had been to corrupt it.

If it was intended to instruct mankind in the hieroglyphic language of former ages, and to show them how absolutely necessary it was, to make a sacrifice of their vices and depraved appetites, before they could render themselves acceptable to the deity, could any way be more natural than to typify those vices by animals whose propensities are analogous to them; and by the allegorical slaughter of them before the altar of the deity, to denote the sacrifice required. To the uninformed multitude such an hieroglyphic would seem to prescribe the actual

sacrifice of the animal. The emblematical apparatus of Cal and Cali would confirm them in the error; and when once the idea was admitted, that the blood of animals was acceptable to the deity, fanaticism would soon demand human victims. Humiliation and presents appease earthly princes; but the divinity of fanaticism was supposed to require more costly offerings, and the severest mortifications which inventive zeal could suggest; a false pride, and vain ambition of displaying superior sanctity, excited an emulation amongst the deluded zealots, which steeled the heart against pain, and supported the sufferers under all their self-inflicted torments. This artificial insensibility acquired the reputation of inspired fortitude; and the admiration of ignorant multitudes repaid the fanatic for his voluntary tortures.

Such were the disorders which arose out of the worship of emblematical deities.

The doctrines of the Saivas seem to have extended themselves over the greatest portion of mankind; they spread amongst remote nations, who were ignorant of the origin and meaning of the rites they adopted; and this ignorance may be considered as the cause of the mixture and confusion of images and ideas, which characterized the mythology of the ancient Greeks and Romans.

In fact, foreign nations could only copy the outward signs and ceremonies: they could not be admitted beyond the threshold of the temple: the edytum was impenetrable to them. Cal and Cali assumed various names: Cal became Cronos, Moloch, Saturn, Dis, Pluto, and Typhon; Cali became Hecate, Proserpine, and Diana, who was worshipped with bloody sacrifices at Tauris. It was to the barbarians that the Greeks were referred, by their own writers, to learn and understand the names and origin of their deities.

Siva, in his character of the Creative Power, became the Zeus Triophthalmos, Jupiter, and Osiris; his consort, Bhavani, became Juno, Venus, Cybele, Rhea, the Syrian goddess, the armed Pallas, Isis, Ceres, and Anna Parenna. This multiplication of deities arose from the ignorance of foreign nations as to the source of the superstition

which they adopted, and the original meaning of the symbols; they supplied their want of information by fables congenial to their own national character and manners: hence arose those contradictions, which made their mythology a labyrinth of confusion.

When the Saivas intended to ascribe particularly, to the object of their worship, the benefits arising from any operation of nature, they decorated the image with suitable emblems, and, assigned to the deity a corresponding title.

For instance, Sancara, (which signifies the benefactor,) is a title of one of those forms of Siva or Cal. To him the gratitude of the Saivas attributed the blessing which are derived from the waters of the Ganges, which rolls its fertilizing stream through various countries, bestowing life and happiness on millions of created beings.

They, therefore, adorned the image of Cal with emblems applicable to the mountain, whence that stupendous river flows.

As this beneficial stream makes its way from the tops of that mountain, through the creepers and underwood, which seem to obstruct its passage to the plains, it is represented to flow from the head of the deity, through his jata, or clotted hair: and as tigers, elephants, and serpents, infest the skirts of the mountains, he is surrounded with serpents, his lower clothing is the skin of the elephant, and he is seated on that of the tiger. He is, likewise, called Nil-Cantha (blue neck), from the appearance which the clouds assume when arrested in their course by the overtopping summit of the mountain.

He has, likewise, the title of Giri Iswara, or lord of mountains; and this union of the attributes of Siva with those of the mountain, is more distinctly pointed out in his marriage with Parvati, a derivative from parvat, a mountain.

As the image of Siva, in this character, was an object of local veneration, its worship was probably confined to the banks of the Ganges. Had it reached the nations of Europe, he would have been considered as a distinct and separate divinity, and ranked amongst the river gods. This symbol is admitted by the Vaishnavas: but in order

to ascribe this inestimable gift to Vishnu, and to assert his superiority over Siva, they insist that the river first flowed out of Vaicuntha (the heaven of Vishnu), from the feet of Vishnu; that when it had descended upon the mountain Cailas, it was received by Siva, and placed on his head amongst his plaited locks.

On Crishna.

When the Vaishnavas separated themselves from the Saivas, they introduced a new symbol of the sun, under the name of Crishna, as a contrast to the horrid rites of Cali, which had so disgusted them.

Crishna, being an incarnation of Vishnu, is depicted with the same characteristic complexion of dark azure, to identify the deity in the symbol.

The earth is represented as a cow, the cow of plenty; and as the planets were considered by the Hindoos to be so many habitable earths, it was natural to describe them by the same hieroglyphic; and as the sun directs their motions, furnishes them with light, and cherishes them with his genial heat, Crishna, the symbol of the sun, was portrayed as an herdsman, sportive, amorous, and inconstant.

The twelve signs are represented as twelve beautiful nymphs; the sun's apparent passage, from one to the other, is described as the roving of the inconstant Crishna. This was probably the groundwork of Jayadeva's elegant poem, the Gita Govinda. It is evidently intended by the circular dance exhibited in the Rasijatra. On a moveable circle, twelve Crishnas are placed alternately with twelve Gopis, hand in hand, forming a circle; the god is thus multiplied to attach him to each respectively, to denote the sun's passage through all the signs; and, by the rotary motion of the machine, the revolution of the year is pointed out.

Crishna obtains a victory on the banks of the Yamuna over the great serpent Caliya Naga, which had poisoned the air, and destroyed the herds in that region.

This allegory may be explained upon the same principle as the exposition given of the destruction of the serpent Python by the arrows of Apollo. It is the sun which, by the powerful action

of the beams, purifies the air, and disperses the noxious vapours of the atmosphere.

Both in the Padma and Garuda we find the serpent Caliya, whom Crishna slew in his childhood, among the deities "worshipped on this day; as the Pythian snake, according to Clemens, was adored with Apollo at Delphi."

Perhaps this adventure of Crishna with the Caliya Naga, may be traced on our sphere, for we find there Serpentarius on the banks of the heavenly Yamuna, the milky way, contending as it were with an enormous serpent, which he grasps with both his hands.

The identity of the Apollo Nomios and Crishna is obvious; both are inventors of the flute; and Crishna is disappointed by Tulasi, in the same manner as Apollo was deluded by Daphne, each nymph being changed to a tree; hence the Tulasi is sacred to Crishna, as the Laurus was to Apollo.

The story of Nareda visiting the numerous chambers of Crishna's seraglio, and finding Crishna every where, appears to allude to the universality of the sun's appearance at the time of the equinoxes, there being then no part of the earth where he is not visible in the course of the twenty-four hours.

The demons, sent to destroy Crishna, are perhaps no more than the monsters of the sky, which allegorically may be said to attempt in vain to obstruct his progress through the heavens.

Many of the playful adventures of Crishna's childhood are possibly mere poetical embellishments to complete the picture.

Perhaps the character of Crishna should be regarded in a two-fold light; in one as the symbol of the sun, in the other as an allegorical representation of the rise and progress of the doctrines of the persecuted Vaishnavas, from the infancy of the sect till its full establishment. Cansa is represented as a Saiva; he appears to have persecuted the sect of Vishnu; but that oppressed sect seems to have multiplied under persecution, till the increase of their power enabled them to overthrow their oppressors; and, finally, to establish the doctrines of Vishnu upon the ruins of Siva.

Of Carticeya, the supposed Mars of India.

He is represented as a warrior with six faces: he is armed with arrows and spears, and he is drawn riding upon a peacock. I suppose this figure to be an emblem of the sun, invented by the worshippers of the Ling, when they first separated into a distinct sect; or, in the hieroglyphical language of the Brahmans, when he was produced from the seed which Mahadeva shed upon the earth, after he had been separated from Bhavani, with whom he had been in strict union a thousand years. My supposition, however, contradicts the present received opinions of the Hindoos; for they do not consider Carticeya as the sun. But, if we examine the figure, we shall find that it can only be applied to the sun; and it will be found to agree in all its parts.

The Hindoos divide the year into six ritus, or seasons, in each of which the sun appears with a different aspect. There are six stars in the lunar constellation, Critica; and, as he derives his name from that Nacshatra, those stars are represented as his nurses, one for each month. Probably the symbol was invented either when the sun was itself in that lunar constellation, or in the month Cartica, when the moon was full in Critica. His arrows and missile weapons represent his rays; the Apollo of the Greeks had also his bow and quiver of arrows. The worship of Carticeya takes place on the last day of Cartica, as preparatory to military expeditions, which ought to commence, according to Menu, in the month Agrahayana, the sun being more propitious at that period for such undertakings.

The setting sun seems followed by the host of heaven; but how can this be expressed in a single hieroglyphical figure? It was done by giving him a peacock for his vahan, or vehicle, in which the tail of his beautiful bird, studded with eyes, and expanded behind the god, portrays the firmament spangled with stars. The Egyptians sometimes represented the sun in the character of a warrior, and he is said to have been addressed as such in the mysteries. But Carticeya is not now considered by the Hindoos as the sun: to account for this, I suppose, that

whenever any new sect arose amongst the Hindoos in former ages, the leaders invented new symbols, exclusively peculiar to themselves, with a view to render their separation from the parent stock more complete, and to mark their worship with distinguishing characters. This practice would give rise to various and different representations of the same object; and, in course of time, as the heat of religious animosities cooled, these various symbols would come to be considered as separate divinities, and be all blended in one mass of superstition. Thus the sun, under the name of Carticeya, becomes the god of war; and, under the name of Crishna, the shepherd god of Mathura and Vrindavana. The sun is now separately worshipped under the names of Surya and Aditya.

Of Indra, the Emblem of the Visible Heavens.

I am led to believe, that many of the fables, inserted in the Puranas, were invented, either after the real meaning of an hieroglyphic had been lost, to conceal that ignorance, or purposely to mislead the mass of people, and prevent too curious and close an inquiry.

Indra is described, like Argus, covered with eyes; to account for this, the fable relates, that Indra, having seen the beautiful wife of a certain Rishi,* was anxious to be more intimate with her; but the watchful husband prevented the intercourse, by arriving unseasonably for the god; the enraged saint uttered an imprecation, and wished that the god might be covered all over with representations of what had been the object of his desires; the curse took immediate effect. The god, full of shame, repented, and, by his entreaties, at last prevailed on the holy man to mitigate the curse, by changing the marks of his shame to as many eyes.

I consider this fable as an instance of the foregoing observation: for Indra is a personification of the atmosphere and visible heavens; and, of course, the eyes with which he is covered describe the stars. The rain-bow is the bow of Indra. The water-spout is the trunk of his elephant; thunder, lightning,

and rain, and every phenomenon of the atmosphere, belong to his department; and like the Jupiter of the Greeks and Romans, he has his heaven, a mansion of sensual delights and enjoyment.

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A JOURNAL OF THEOLOGICAL, MORAL, AND POLITICAL DISCUSSION.

(Conducted by the Editor of the *Freethinkers' Information for the People.*)

This publication is intended as an organ for a large class of thinkers, who, dissatisfied with the existing institutions of society—religious, moral, social, and political, are desirous of a change; but differing in many particulars from each other, require a medium through which their differences may be made known and freely discussed, that thereby unity of principle and action may be obtained towards the reconstruction of society upon sound and philosophical principles. With this leading object in view, the *FREE INQUIRER* will be open to Pagan, Jew, Christian, Mahometan, Deist, Atheist, Freethinker, Socialist, Chartist, Mormonite, &c., &c., providing conciseness, and a becoming philosophical spirit, be maintained; the Editor reserving to himself, in the absence of more able controversialists, the right of expressing his views on the contributions of any of his correspondents with whom he differs; and also, in his leading article, to take what affirmative ground he pleases on the leading topics of the times. A novel feature in this periodical, as far as this class of productions are concerned, will be the insertion of original and selected works of fiction, in exemplification of the blessings of free thought, and the pernicious consequences of priestcraft and superstition; such works illustrated by beautiful engravings on wood, executed by a first-rate artist. Every Number will contain two engravings, one a portrait of some illustrious freethinker, or a representation of some equally interesting subject, and the other illustrative of the work of fiction.

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"LET ALL HAVE FULL LIBERTY TO TEACH AND MAINTAIN WHATEVER OPINIONS THEY
MAY CHOOSE."—*Melancthon.*

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THE WORLD'S PANTHEON; OR, THE PICTURE GALLERY OF SUPERSTITION.

NO. VI.—THE VARA AVATAR, OR THIRD INCARNATION OF VISHNU IN THE FORM OF
A BOAR.



The whole earth was covered with water. Brahma again resumed his posture of contemplation and penance, to obtain the means of raising up the earth; and poured forth the following prayer to the throne of the Almighty in profound humility of soul. Oh, Bhagavat! since thou broughtest me from nonentity into existence, for a particular purpose, accomplish by thy benevolence that purpose! In this situation, by the power of God, there issued from the essence of Brahma, a being shaped like a boar, white, and exceedingly small; this being, in the space of one hour, grew to the size of an elephant of the largest magnitude, and remained in the air. Brahma was astonished on beholding this figure, and discovered by the force of internal penetration, that it could be nothing but the power of the Omnipotent which had assumed a body and become visible. He now felt that God is all, and that all is from him, and all in him, and said to Mareechee and his sons (attendant genii), a wonderful

animal has emanated from my essence; at first of the smallest size, it has in one hour increased to this enormous bulk, and without doubt it is a portion of the Almighty Power. They were engaged in this conversation when that, Vara, or boar-form, suddenly uttered a sound like the loudest thunder, and the echo reverberated, and shook all the quarters of the universe; but still, under this dreadful awe of heaven, a certain wonderful divine confidence secretly animated the hearts of Brahma, Mareechee, and the other genii, who immediately began praises and thanksgivings. That Vara figure, hearing the power of the Vedas and Mantras from their mouths, again made a loud noise, and became a dreadful spectacle. Shaking the full-flowing mane which hung down his neck on both sides, and erecting the humid hairs of his body, he proudly displayed his two most exceedingly white tusks; then rolling around his wine-coloured eyes, and erecting his tail, he descended from the region of the air, and plunged head foremost in the water. The whole body of water was convulsed by the motion, and began to rise in waves, while the guardian spirit of the sea, being terrified, began to tremble for his domain, and cry out for quarter and mercy. At this the devotees and reyshees again commenced their praises in honour of Bhagavat, who, by one glance of his eye, illumined the whole world of water. As the power of the Omnipotent had assumed the body of Vara, on that account he condescended to use the particular instinct of that animal, and began to smell about, that he might discover the place where the earth was submerged. At length, having divided the water, and

arriving at the bottom, he saw the earth lying, a mighty and barren stratum; then he took up the ponderous globe (freed from the water), and raised it high on his tusk:—one would say it was a beautiful lotos blossoming on the tip of

his tusk. In a moment, with one leap, coming to the surface by the all-directing power of the Omnipotent Creator, he spread it, like a carpet, on the face of the water, and then vanished from the sight of Brahma.

THE THREE FIRST AVATARS CONSIDERED IN RELATION TO THEIR SYMBOLICAL AND ASTRONOMICAL MEANING.

After an attentive consideration of these various circumstances in the history of the first Indian or fish Avatar, we are naturally led to examine the parallel traits in that of the other piscatory deities of Asia; one of the most distinguished of whom, next to the Chaldean, Dagon himself, or Oannes, previously considered, is the Syrian Atergatis, a name which the learned Selden derives from two Phœnician words, Addir Dag, the magnificent fish, and who is doubtless the Derceto, or whalefish of the Greeks. This symbolical deity so far differed from the Oannes of Chaldea, that the superior part of the sacred animal was female, having the face and breasts of a woman; whereas Vishnu and Dagon are male from the waist upwards. Dagon, however, was not only a Chaldean deity, but was adored by the maritime nation of the Phœnicians as their principal divinity, and fishes were sacred to him. The Philistines also held this deity in profound veneration, the Philistines of Ashdod, also the Azotus of the Greeks, worshipped this deity in a splendid temple called Beth-Dagon, which was ultimately destroyed by Jonathan, a general of the Maccabees.

The fish-god of the ancient Egyptian zodiac, bears an exact resemblance to Vishnu in that incarnation. From the foregoing, and a variety of parallel circumstances, we are inclined to think that the Chaldaic Oannes, the Phœnician and Philistian Dagon, and the Pisces of the Syrian and Egyptian zodiac, were the same deity with the Indian Vishnu in his first incarnation. Diodorus Siculus plainly alludes to this Syrian divinity when he informs us, that at Ascalon, a city of Syria, was a sacred pool full of fishes, and that near it was the celebrated temple of Dercetus; while Lucian's account, already detailed, of

the grand festival annually celebrated in Syria, and called the descent into the lake, can scarcely otherwise be considered than as immediately allusive to something of the kind.

But an astronomical origin is, doubtless, the true source of the greater Avatars of India, and the intelligence plainly intended to be conveyed is of a chronological kind; those appellatives suggesting that the particular Avatar in question took place when the sun was passing through such a constellation in the heavens, or at the moment when the solstitial and equinoctial points were in such positions as are shadowed out by the sidereal titles which they respectively bear. That the Hindoos did, with minute accuracy, and almost religious scrupulosity, attend to the relative situation of the heavenly bodies, and refer to them in their chronological details, when they wished to note the exact epoch of great national events, is evident from their having fixed, with such precision, the period of the world's commencement, when there was a conjunction of all the planets in the beginning of Mesha, or the Ram; and that of the Cali yug, or present age, to the 18th of February, in the year 3012 before the Christian æra, when there happened another planetary conjunction, besides the remarkable event of an eclipse of the moon. That they continued this vigilant attention to the position of the heavenly phenomena, in every period of their ancient empire, is indisputably apparent from two important actual observations, made at very remote æras, by two highly celebrated astronomers; the first a Muni, or holy man, who flourished near three thousand years ago; and the second named Varaha, who lived about the 500th year of the Christian æra.

The very curious account which we

read in Plutarch and other ancient writers, of the gods concealing themselves under the form of different animals to avoid the fury of Typhon, is probably only a corruption of these astronomical traditions of the elder empire of India, whose sons visited Egypt in the earliest ages after the dispersion. Those animals were, doubtless, the symbolical ones which form the zodiacal asterisms, as Jupiter in the Ram, Osiris in the Bull, Pan in the Goat, &c. while Typhon himself seems to have been canonized in the dreary Scorpion. It is possible, that all the incarnations of Vishnu may allude to the power of the sun in its passage through the several constellations, during the revolution of uncounted ages, which the Hindoos conceive to have elapsed; and as the Syrian Venus was constellated in the Fish, so might the chief deity of India shine forth in the same asterism. In fact, if the reader will cast his eye on the Egyptian zodiac, he will find in the twelfth asterism a figure portrayed, exactly resembling that form under which the Vishnu of India and the Atergatis or Dagon of Chaldea, are respectively designated in those sculptures and paintings, in which are transmitted down to posterity the mythological conceptions of the Syrians and the Indians. Concerning the occasion of the constellating of the Syrian goddess in Pisces, what we read in Hyginus is not a little remarkable, and is plainly connected with the Egyptian mythology, viz. that Venus took that form to avoid the fury with which she was pursued by the enraged Typhon, and threw herself, with her two sons, Cupid and Adonis, into the river Euphrates; Adonis was lost, but Cupid was preserved, and the surviving mother and son were afterwards exalted to the constellation in the heavens. On this account Ovid affirms that the Syrian nation ever thought it impious to regale upon fish.

Hyginus also observes, that the fish stiled Notius, saved Isis (nature) in great extremity. From these circumstances, and the striking analogy that runs through the whole of the relation, it is evident that there exists a connection in the ancient history of those countries, and that astronomy usurps a considerable portion of all Oriental history whatsoever.

There are also two other remarkable fishes designated on the sphere, and both of them belonging to the number of the forty-eight old constellations. The first is the Dolphin, the second is the Cetus, or whale, both of which are situated near the zodiac, and either of these might have been the supposed temporary abode of the solar deity, the symbol of a nobler Numen, shining forth, in the full splendour of benevolence, upon the perishing race of mortals. The Grecian fable of Orian preserved from destruction on the back of the dolphin, is in all probability only a mutilation of the more ancient event of Menu saved by the Matsya; and from this, it is more likely than from any other source, has arisen the very ancient opinion that dolphins have always been very friendly to the human race.

Sir William Jones, without favouring us with any farther explanation of his meaning, confesses himself to be of opinion, that a considerable portion of this particular Avatar relates to astronomy. There is little doubt but that the serpent Asooke, whose enormous body enfolded the globe, represented by the mountain Mandar, or the north pole, is no other than the celestial serpent, or dragon, whose baleful influence is represented, in all Oriental systems of astrology, to be so fatal to the revolving spheres, or else that whimsical representation of a still more visionary dragon, formed by the course of the moon near the ecliptic, of whose belly, head, and tail, is exhibited in the Indian Antiquities, an astronomico-mythological engraving. By this allegory, do not the Brahmin astronomers mean to indicate that some dreadful position of the planetary orbs, which are often represented in Sanscrit writings, as personified Dewtahs, occasioned the grand convulsion: or that some fatal eclipse, which ever happens near that region of the heaven, where there fancies have fixed their imaginary dragon, portended and accompanied it?

The Testudo, or Lyra of the sphere, is one of the old forty-eight asterisms, situated in the northern hemisphere, near the pole, and remarkable for a conspicuous and brilliant star of the first magnitude, called Lucida Lyrae. The position of this splendid star is in the shell of the constellation, and on the

rim of that shell. This celestial lyre, in the Egyptian and Greek mythology, is said to have been the fabrication of immortal hands, for the god Mercury is fabled to have made it out of the shell of a tortoise. The truth is, it was originally the animal, and not the shell only that formed the constellation. It is probable that the Greeks, wishing to accommodate to their own mythology all the symbolical figures in the sphere, first changed the testudo of Vishnu to the lyre of Orpheus, though Vishnu playing on his lyre, in the eighth incarnation, and charming the herdsmen and animals of Mathura, appears to be the

real prototype of that fabulous and celebrated character. The pre-eminent splendour and beauty of the Lucida Lyre might well induce the ancient Indians to consider it as the peculiar and favoured abode of deity, as its beneficent light beaming from the arctic circle, and therefore so favourable to navigators, rendered it peculiarly proper to be introduced in that portion of a system of physical mythology, intended to record so awful an event as a general deluge of the globe.

(To be continued.) p. 304.

THE ORIGIN AND INTERPRETATIONS OF THE HINDOO RELIGION (concluded.)

Of Jupiter and Europa, and Jupiter and Leda.

The Hindoos have eight representations of female figures, which, except in sex, exactly resemble the deity, of which each is a Sacti, or power, with the same attributes and vehicle: Maheswari is the Sacti of Mahesa, or Siva; Brahmi, or Brahmani, of Brahma, Narayani, of Narayena; Aindri, of Indra; Caumari, of Carticeya; Varahi, of Vishnu, in the Varaha Avatar; Narasimhi, of Vishnu, in the Narasimha Avatar; and Aparajita, a form of Bhavani, the female principle: this last may be the aphrodite of the Greeks. It is probable that the representation of Maheswari, or a female Siva, riding on a white bull, may have given rise to the story of Europa's rape: and the representation of Brahmi, or the female Brahma, with the swan, may, in like manner, have occasioned the fable of Jupiter and Leda. These explanations were, perhaps, invented by the Greeks to account for symbols, of the meaning of which they were ignorant.

Anna Perenna.

The Romans themselves were ignorant of the history of this goddess, and the origin of her rites, although she was an object of their veneration

and worship. Whence did this ignorance proceed? Was it that the memory of the institution was lost in its remote antiquity? Or was it an adoption of a foreign ritual, without advertising to its origin?

According to some authors, she was the daughter of Belus, and sister of Dido, who fled to Battus, king of the isle of Malta, after the death of her sister, when Hierbas, king of the Getuli, attempted to take Cathage. Not finding herself safe with Battus, on account of the threats of Hierbas, she fled to Laurentum in Italy, where Aeneas was settled: he met her on the banks of the Numicius, and received her into his palace, treating her with the respect due to her quality. Lavinia considered her as a rival, and sought her destruction; but Anna being admonished of this in a dream, fled to the river Numicius, whereof she was made a nymph, as she told those who sought for her, and ordered them to call her in future Anna Perenna, because she should for ever remain under those waters.

The Albans instituted rejoicings on the banks of the river, with dancing and feasting; and the Romans, in imitation of them, did the same on the banks of the Tiber. The dances and sports were very indecent and lascivious. Ovid has described these festivals, which were celebrated on the 15th of March:

they sacrificed to her for long life; *annare et perennare*.

It is probable that this legend was a popular tradition, merely local, peculiar to Romans and Albans; but it was not the sole conjecture, for, according to Ovid, some supposed her to be the moon, some Themis, and others Io; some imagined she was the daughter of Atlas, and some took her for Amalthea, who nursed Jupiter in his infancy; while others conceived her to be an old woman of Bovilla, who was supposed to have fed the people of Rome, in very ancient times, when oppressed by famine, in a miraculous manner, and to have then fled and disappeared in the holy Aventine mount, and in gratitude for this relief this festival had been instituted by the Romans.

Amidst so many conjectures, perhaps we may at this distance of time discover the mystery at Benares, in Anna Purna Devi, the Hindoo goddess of abundance, whose name is derived from Anna (food), and Purna (abundant); let us regularly weigh each conjecture mentioned by Ovid, rejecting only the local story of the deified sister of Dido, and we shall find none that is inapplicable to the Hindoo goddess. 1st, The Diana of the Romans was represented with a crescent on her forehead; it was her characteristic mark. The Hindoo goddess, as being the consort of Siva or Cal, is decorated in like manner; this may account for her being considered as the moon. 2ndly, The attributes of Themis, whether she is considered as Ceres, which was the supposition of Clemens of Alexandria, in his description of her obscene mysteries; or as the goddess of justice, piety, and virtue, as described by Diodorus Siculus, are equally applicable to Anna Purna Devi; the conformity of her name and office to the attributes of Ceres is strikingly apparent. But, if Themis is justice, piety, and virtue personified, the character will equally suit the consort of the god of justice, Vrisha Iswara, and the lord of the sacred bull, Dhurma Raja. 3rdly, That she was Io, the daughter of Inachus, under the form of a cow, is a supposition which will not be found inapplicable to Anna Purna Devi, when it is known that the earth, symbolized as a cow of plenty, is one of the forms of the Hindoo goddess.

4thly, That she was the daughter of Atlas, Maia, who was beloved by Jupiter, is a conjecture for which a foundation may be traced in the Hindoo goddess. Might not the name of Maya or Maha Maya (the beloved consort of Siva) have given rise to this conjecture; the Hindoo term being applied to signify the mother, the great mother! 5thly, The image of Anna Purna is represented sitting on a throne, giving food, with a golden ladle, to an infant Siva, who stretches out his little hand to receive it. Is not the resemblance particularly striking between this representation and the character of Amalthea, who nursed Jupiter when an infant? Lastly, the tradition of her being the old woman of Bovilla, which Ovid himself seems inclined to adopt, is equally applicable to Anna Purna Devi, who, according to the Puranas, under the form of an old woman, miraculously fed Vyasa, and his ten thousand pupils, when reduced to the extremities of distress and famine by the anger of Siva, because Vyasa had presumed to prefer Vishnu to him.

It may not, therefore, be an unfounded conjecture, that the consort of Siva is the point in which all those opinions meet, and that they were founded on confined and confused traditions of the goddess of abundance.

Description of Anna Purna Devi, from the Annada Cripa.

She is of ruddy complexion, her robe of various dyes, a crescent on her forehead; she gives subsistence; she is bent by the weight of her full breasts; Bhava, or Siva (as a child), is playing before her, with a crescent on his forehead; she looks at him with pleasure, and seated on a throne, relieves his hunger; all good is united in her; her names are Annada, Anna Purna Devi, Bhavani, and Bhagavati.

Of the four months' sleep of Horus and Vishnu.

The Abbe Pluche (to whose ingenious work I am so much indebted), mentions two hieroglyphics, one taken from the Isiac table, and the other described upon a mummy. They both relate to the sleep of Horus.

The one represents a couch, in the

form of a lion, with Horus swaddled up and sleeping on it. Beneath the couch are four jars: an Anubis standing by the side of the couch; and an Isis at the head of it, in the act of awakening Horus.

When Anubis, or the Dog Star, rose heliacally, the Egyptians considered it as a warning to them of the approach of the inundation, during which the operations of husbandry were suspended; this suspension was deemed a period of rest: to express that inaction, Horus was described as swaddled up, unable to use his arms, and sleeping upon this lion-formed couch. Anubis is putting him to rest, because the rising of the Dog Star proclaimed that cessation of labour. The four jars denote the four months. When, by the operations of nature, the water has subsided, and the river has been reduced within its banks, labour is resumed, and Horus is awakened by Isis, or personified nature.

In the other hieroglyphic, we have the same couch with Horus swaddled up, but in the act of turning himself: there are only three jars under this couch, to denote, that this action of turning himself to sleep, on his other side, takes place at the commencement of the third month. This interpretation I have given, because what follows, respecting the sleep of Vishnu, seems to justify it. Let us, therefore, turn to the Hindoo representation of the four months' sleep of Vishnu or Heri.

On the eleventh day of the enlightened half of the lunar month, Asarh, Vishnu begins his repose on the serpent, Sesha. On the same day of the bright half of the lunar month, Bhadra, he turns on his side; and on this day the Hindoos celebrate the Jal Yatra, or the retiring of the waters. On the eleventh day of the bright half of the lunar month, Cartica, he is awakened, and rises from his sleep of four months.

The allusion will be made perfectly clear, when it is known that water is considered as one of the forms of Vishnu.

The water, rising till it covers the winding mazes of the river's course, is personified by Vishnu sleeping upon the serpent Sesha, whose hundred heads are the numerous channels which discharge the waters into the sea. As

long as it continues to rise, he sleeps on one side. When the inundation, having risen to its height, begins to subside, he turns on the other side. When the waters have run off, and the winding banks of the river are completely cleared of the swoln waters of the inundation, he is said to have arisen from his sleep, being invoked, and awakened with this Mantra, or incantation.

"The clouds are dispersed, the full moon will appear in perfect brightness, and I come in hope of acquiring purity, to offer the fresh flowers of the season: awake from thy long slumber, awake lord of all worlds."

Let us compare the Hindoo legend with the Egyptian hieroglyphic, and I think no doubt can remain of the identity of Horus and Vishnu, or Heri; and if this position be admitted, we shall find ourselves in possession of the key to the Egyptian, Grecian, and Roman mythology.


Of the Durga Puja.

The Abbe Pluche mentions an Egyptian hieroglyphic from the Isiac table. Horus, armed with an arrow, is slaying a river horse, or hippopotamos, which is surrounded with the leaves of the lotos, and other aquatic plants. He says, "By this monster, which dwells in the Nile, and comes out of it to lay waste and devour whatever it meets with, we can understand nothing but the inundation." Horus is the same with Heri or Vishnu. If the Saivas admitted in this country a similar victory over the inundation, they would substitute Siva, or his consort, for the Vaishnava symbol Horus.

The sphinx, an emblem of the sun's passage through Leo and Virgo, would suggest the idea of decorating Cali, like the armed Pallas, as Virgo, attended by her *sinh*, or lion, who is Siva himself in that form; and they ascribe to her a victory over the monster Mahish Asura, a giant, with the head of a buffalo: this animal delights in water; and, when he comes out of it, is as destructive, by laying waste and devouring the harvest, as the hippopotamos; the latter animal not being a native of Hindostan, it was natural to supply its place with one which had

similar characteristics. If the Hindoo religion was brought from Egypt into India, the importers of it would see the same phenomenon of the annual rising of the river; but they would observe, that in this country it was accompanied with heavy rains, thunder, lightning, and storms of wind, an apparent war of the elements. Hence the buffalo-headed symbol of the inundation was erected into a giant, at the head of a vast army, warring against the gods: the novelty of these phenomena, to the first comers, would suggest to them this poetical personification. The title borne by Cali, in this character, is Durga, or rather Durgati Nasini, the remover of difficulties; as she is a form of Cali, she has the same bloody rites.

The Abbe mentions the Canopus, as a jar or pitcher of water, intended to make the people acquainted with the exact progress and increase of the inundation: he adds, that they used to mark these jars with the figure T, or small cross + to express the increase and swelling of the river. Canob is the Egyptian word, which is rendered Canopos by the Greeks; the information, which this seems intended to convey, was so particularly necessary to the Egyptians, that it is no wonder it should, in course of time, cease to be considered as a mere sign, and acquire a place amongst the deities themselves. The word Canob, by the analogy of the Sanscrit language, becomes cumbh, which signifies a jar or vase: it gives name, in the Hindoo zodiac, to the sign Aquarius. This cumbh, ghata, or jar, is the principal object in the celebration of the Hindoo worship. It is considered as almost the deity itself. It cannot be dispensed with; while the image of Durga may be omitted entirely. The Vaishnavas use the sacred jar, which they mark with several crosses in this

manner . The Saivas mark


the jar with a double triangle, thus



: one triangle signifies Siva,

uniting in himself the three great at-

tributes: the other triangle is his consort, with the same character and attributes. The worshippers of the Sacti, or female principle, mark the jar with

this figure . These marks are

called jantra: they are, in fact, hieroglyphic characters; and there is a vast variety of them. The above are only mentioned here, because of their use in this Puja, and as they distinguish three principal sects of the Hindoos.

This coincidence between the Hindoo ceremonies and the Egyptian figures, is remarkably striking. They appear to me to explain each other: and we can scarce doubt of the identity, when we consider that this ceremony takes place at the autumnal equinox, at which time the season of storms and inundation is over, and they are supposed to have been subdued, during the sun's passage through the signs Leo and Virgo.

On the Huli of the Hindoos, and the Hilaria of the Romans.

The Romans celebrated the Hilaria at the vernal Equinox, in honour of the mother of the gods. It was a festival which was continued for several days, with a great display of pomp and rejoicing; it began the eighth day before the Calends of April, or the 25th of March; the statue of Cybele was carried about in procession, and the attending crowds assumed to themselves whatever rank, character, or dress, their fancy led them to prefer: it was a kind of masquerade, full of mirth and frolic. In fact, it was the earth, under the name of Cybele, which was worshipped at the commencement of that genial season, when she receives from the sun those vivifying rays, which are so adapted to the production of fruits and flowers. Let this ceremony be compared with the Hindoo celebration of the Huli, at the same period of the year. The epithet of purple is constantly given to the spring by the Roman poets, in allusion to the blossoms, which nature, as it were in sport, scatters over the earth with such variety and profusion. The Hindoos design the same idea in

the purple powder (Abir), which they throw about at each other with so much sportive pleasantry: the objects of worship with the Hindoos are the earth and fire; that genial warmth, which pervades all nature at that period of the year: the licentiousness of the songs and dances, at this season, was intended to express the effects of that warmth on all animated objects.

The Hindoos have likewise their masquerading processions, in which gods and goddesses, rajas and ranis, are represented; and the ceremonies are concluded, by burning the past or deceased year, and welcoming the renovation of nature.

Of the Vastu Puja of the Hindoos, and the Vesta of the Romans.

On the last day of Paush, the Hindoos make sweetmeats, with Til, or sesamum: it is therefore called Tiliasancrant. It is the day when landholders worship the earth and fire. The sect of Siva sacrifice a sheep to the earth; and the Vaishnavas offer up their bloodless oblations to fire. The ceremony is called the Vastu Puja. Vastu is the habitable earth. A great raja was called Vastu Purush; the expression is used by a raiat to his zemindar, as a title of the highest respect. I think, that, in the name of the ceremony, and in the objects of worship, may be traced the goddess Vesta of the Romans: the goddess of Nature, under whose name they worshipped the earth and fire.

The Fable of Bir Bhadr, invented by the Saivas to exalt their Opinions and Sect.

This fable, I conceive, is descriptive of an attempt to abolish the worship of the male and female symbols; of the struggles of the contending sects; and (as it is the nature of fanaticism to increase and spread in proportion to the opposition raised against it) of the final establishment and extension of that worship. It seems a story invented by the Saivas, to shew the imbecility of their opponents, and to exalt their own doctrines.

Dacsha celebrated a yajnya, to which he invited all the Devatas, except his son-in-law, Siva. His consort, the goddess, being hurt at this exclusion, went into the assembly, and remonstrated,

but in vain; she expired with vexation upon the spot. Siva, upon hearing this, throws his Jeta, or plaited hair, upon the ground, and from that produces Bir Bhadr, a furious being, armed with a trident, who immediately attacks and disperses the whole assembly; puts a stop to the sacrifice; and cuts off the head of Dacsha. Siva took up the body of his deceased consort, and placing it upon his head, in a fit of madness, danced up and down the earth, threatening all things with destruction. Vishnu, at the request of the other Devatas, with his chakra, cut the body of Sati into fifty-one pieces, which Siva, in his frantic dancing, scattered in different parts of the earth. Each place where a part fell became a place of worship, dedicated to the female power: and the frenzy of Siva subsiding, he ordained, that the Linga should likewise be worshipped at each of those places; and Dacsha, on condition of embracing the doctrine of Siva, was restored to life; degraded with the head of a goat instead of his own. I should imagine that the furious Bir Bhadr, produced by Siva, was a vast body of fanatics, raised by the Brahmans of that sect, who might, at that time, have been both popular and powerful; probably this was a vast body of fanatic Sannyasis, interested in the dispute by personal motives, as well as instigated by their Brahmans.

The attempt to abolish the worship failed, and served to establish it firmer, and extend it farther than ever. The gods themselves are represented as the actors, instead of their votaries; but it may allude to some commotion that really happened. Probably the heads of those sects, which had introduced this symbolic worship, were alarmed at the progress of it, and at the effects produced on the morals of the people: they wished to abolish it when it had taken root too deeply; and as they had introduced it, Siva is described as the son-in-law, and Sati as the daughter of Dacsha.

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THE WORLD'S PANTHEON; OR, THE PICTURE GALLERY OF SUPERSTITION.

NO. VII.—THE FOURTH INCARNATION OF VISHNU, IN THE FORM OF NARA-SING,
OR THE MAN LION.



The following account of the fourth Avatar is derived from translations from the Sanscreeet, by Messrs. Chambers and Halhed, both eminent oriental scholars.

According to Mr. Chambers, the younger brother of that gigantic demon Hirinacheren, was Hirinakassap, who succeeded the former in his kingdom over the inferior world, and refused to do homage to Vishnu. He had a son named Pralhaud, who, at an early age, openly disapproved this part of his father's conduct, being under the tuition of Sokeracharj. His father persecuted him on this account, banished him, and even sought to kill him, but was prevented by the interposition of heaven, which appeared on the side of Pralhaud. At length, Hirinakassap was softened, and recalled his son to his court; where, as he sat in full assembly, he began again to argue with him against the supremacy of Vishnu, boasted that he himself was lord of all

the visible world, and asked what Vishnu could pretend to more. Pralhaud replied, that Vishnu had no fixed abode, but was present everywhere. "Is he," said his father, "in that PILLAR?"—"Yes," returned Pralhaud. "Then let him come forth," said Hirinakassap; and rising from his seat, struck the pillar with his foot; upon which, Vishnu, in the form of Nara-Sing, that is to say, with a body like a man, but a head like a lion, came out of the pillar, and tore Hirinakassap in pieces. Vishnu then fixed Pralhaud on his father's throne, and his reign was a mild and virtuous one, and, as such, was a contrast to that of his father. He left a son named Nama-chee, who inherited his power and his virtues, and was the father of Bali, the founder of the once magnificent city of Mahabalipoor.* Through the disguise of these fables, Mr. Chambers observes, we may discern some imperfect records of great events, and of revolutions that have happened in remote times; and they perhaps merit our attention the more, as it is not likely that any records of very ancient Hindoo history exist, but in this obscure and fantastic dress. Their poets seem to have been their only historians, as well as divines; and whatever they relate is wrapped up in this burlesque garb, set off, by way of ornament, with circumstances hugely incredible and absurd; and all this without any date, and in no other order or method than such as the poet's fancy suggested and found most convenient. Nevertheless, by comparing names and grand events

* Asiatic Researches, vol. i. p. 158.

recorded by them with those interspersed in the histories of other nations, and by calling in the assistance of ancient monuments, coins, and inscriptions, as occasion shall offer, some probable conjectures, at least, if not important discoveries, may, it is hoped, be made on these interesting objects.*

The following more extensive history of this Avatar, is extracted immediately by Mr. Halhed from the *Seeva Pooraun*, premising two things; first, that the Metempsychosis is the basis of all their mythology, the grand agent that moves the vast machine; and, secondly, that the tremendous austerities, voluntarily undergone and long continued in by the Hindoos, are supposed to give the devotee power even over the elements of nature, to arrest the orbs of heaven in their rapid career, to disarm Vishnu of his thunder, and almost avail to annul the absolute decrees of fate.

Of the order of those evil demons, that act so conspicuous a part in the Hindoo mythology and early mythological history, were the two brothers *Hirinacheren* and *Hirinakassap*. They had, in the preceding state, been of the order of happy and perfect spirits, and their important office in the celestial regions was to guard the portals of the palace of the divine Vishnu; but, having insulted the four sons of Brahma, who had come to the gate to pay their customary devotions to the former deity, they were precipitated from that eminent station to wander through the Metempsychosis in an earthly form. The particulars of the combat of the former, under the name of the Giant *Hayagreva*, with Vishnu, in the *Vara*, or *Boar*, Avatar, need not be again repeated; the latter, in order to do more extensive mischief in his new sphere of action, devoted himself to acts of severe mortification, and employed himself, says the *Pooraun*, ten thousand years in penance and in honour of Brahma, standing in a posture immovable, till the very birds made their nests on him; but still he would not desist. Brahma gave notice to the *Devatas*, or good genii ranging the earth; and then granted his desires; which were, that he might not be conquered by any being then existing,

either man, deva, persee, or animal of earth, or air, or water; and that his death should happen neither by day nor night, nor on earth nor in heaven. Brahma, vanquished by the power of penance and prayer united, assented; and the deity, going from his presence, summoned all the other deities, and began to reign over them with their consent, or slay all those that resisted. He gradually extended his power over *Paradise* and *Patala*, or the infernal regions; so that, on account of his sanguinary vengeance, all the other sovereigns of the world's vast circuit were cut off, or remained in entire subjection to himself. His arrogance at length rose to such a pitch, that he thought within himself, if even Vishnu should then present himself, he would give the god of nature battle.

About this time was born in his house a son named *Pralhaud*, who was ever employed in uttering the name of *Bhagavat*, or God; and at five years of age he was put under a tutor, according to the ordinance of the *Vedas*. The tutor was anxious alone to teach him the dark and occult sciences of the *Rakshas* (infernal spirits); but *Pralhaud* persisted in only learning that of devotion to *Nara-Sing*, and all his tutor's prohibitions were in vain. Those of his father and mother were not more efficacious; and the little *Pralhaud*, in the tutor's absence, even taught his school-fellows that one's natural father and mother were of no avail and authority compared with the supreme parent; and that this world was no more than a dream or an idea, and that the recollection of the *Bhagavat* should alone give motion to their tongues. Correction, however, and the fear of worse, operated on the other boys, and they dropped the name of *Bhagavat*; but *Pralhaud* resisted every threat with the utmost firmness, even unto death. He was thrown into the fire and the water without receiving any detriment; no sword could touch him, and, in the panoply of piety, he was perfectly invulnerable.

After ten thousand trials of his inflexible virtue, the impious and relentless tyrant one day thus spoke to the intrepid youth: "*Pralhaud*, you say that *Bhagavat* is present everywhere, and that he is enveloped by every

* Asiatic Researches, vol. i. p. 158.

part of nature; is he then in this pillar of the palace, or is he not?" Pralhad replied, "Most certainly he is." The ditye, then, in great wrath, raised aloft the golden sceptre that swayed the world, and said, "If your Bhagavat be in this pillar, see only what kind of homage I shall pay him:" and, with all his might, struck the pillar. On the instant of the blow, a tremendous voice issued from the smitten column, which caused an universal trembling throughout the palace. When it was evening, and the sun about to set, the pillar burst asunder, and Vishnu started forth in the form of Nara-Sing, breathing forth terrific flames. The surrounding dityes fled away in amaze and horror, and such a dreadful noise was heard, that the mountains and the ocean forsook their places. Women with child miscarried wherever the voice was heard; and all the dityes were precipitated to the abyss of hell. Hirinakassap, however, stood firm in battle for two ghurries; but, as Bhagavat conceived that if the contest should be of any long continuance, the dissolution of the world must inevitably take place, he dragged the struggling ditye by the hair of his head to a subterraneous vault beneath the threshold of the palace; there, extending him across his knees, tore open his belly with his talons, and, faithful to the instinct of the animal whose form he had assumed, quaffed the blood of the disembowelled monarch.

Thus punctually was fulfilled the promise of the deity, the reward of intense devotion, that he should neither be conquered nor perish by man or genii; that his death should not happen by day or by night, for it was between both; nor by any noxious animal in the course of nature; nor on earth nor in heaven, for his destruction was effected in an arched vault that sustained the portal of the palace.

At this event, says the Pooraun, all the Devatas, or good genii, rejoiced and rained flowers from above, and sang praises; while on earth the Gandharves and Assoors shouted and danced in transports of virtuous exultation. Pralhad, in astonishment, joined with them. However, the wrath of Nara-Sing burned so excessive, that it was not appeased by the ditye's death; and

the Devatas themselves were all afraid to approach him. At length, with united voice, they called aloud on Vishnu, in his preserving capacity, for assistance; urging, that, as he had before rescued them from the poison which arose out of the ocean, when churned by the evil demons, and received it in his throat, so now they besought him to relieve them from the flame issuing from Nara-Sing's mouth, with which they were tormented. Vishnu smiled propitious, and Nara-Sing instantly vanished.*

The astronomical history of Orion has been already detailed: it is, however, very deserving of notice while we are upon this Avatar, that the Greater Dog, according to Hyde, is in Syriac called Kelbo Gavoro, Canis Gigantis, sive ORIONIS.† In after ages, the Egyptians, to whom the Canis Major was a constellation of very great importance, altered the mythology, and appropriated to their own fabulous history the dog of Orion, and, omitting the name of the Assyrian monarch, called it Sirius and Osiris, simply the dog-star, by which name it descended to the Greeks, and from the Greeks to us.

In considering the astronomical allusion of every Avatar, we ought never to lose sight of the great, though secondary, object of the adoration of the Hindoos, the solar orb, in whose refulgent centre they supposed the throne of the Creator of the universe to be fixed. Hence they contemplated its ray with ecstasy, and venerated the hallowed flame kindled by its beams. To the relative position of the more conspicuous constellations, also, sedulous attention should be paid in an investigation of this nature, because the ancients conceived them to be the receptacles of elevated spirits, who had finished the terrestrial journey, and of genii commissioned to superintend the revolution of the orbs, and regulate the vast economy of nature. The splendid star, from its position called Cor Leonis, or Heart of the Lion, one of the most brilliant of the heavens, about the period of the dispersion, was, we are certain, from retrograde calculation as

* Manuscript of the Seeva Pooraun, translated by Mr. Halhed.

† Dr. Hyde's Uleg Beg, p. 53.

well as the astronomical books of the ancient Persians, in the solstitial colure,* and therefore must have been at that time, to the rising astronomers of the Chaldean school, an interesting object of peculiar and unwearied attention. The irresistible energy and distinguished eminence of that supreme sovereign of the beastly train, whose name was conferred upon the constellation, gave additional force to the allegory; and therefore it was feigned, that the sun, pouring the fierce ardour of his summer beam upon the lion, than a solstitial sign, with his devouring fire consumed the blasphemer, and blasted the daring project of his gigantic ambition.

All the Avatars are male, representing the sun under the similitude of a conqueror, young and vigorous, as the Greeks represented their Hercules, when he toiled through his twelve labours, (which possibly may be only a copy of Vishnu in the Avatars,) and it will be remembered that this most famous ex-

* Consult M. Bailli's *Astronomie Ancienne*, p. 13.

plot was with a lion; the Nemæan lion, exalted to the sphere with the epithet Hercules often conferred, in consequence, on that whole constellation.

Hercules and the Nemæan lion, therefore, seem to be only varieties of the Nara-sing. Mithra with his lion are the same; it is still the lion of the sphere: and the radiant youth, conquering the savage, or conquering by its means, is still the sun. Hence the priests of Mithra were actually termed lions, from being invested, during the pomps of that deity, with the skins of that animal; and the mysteries themselves were called leonticæ. Hence Hercules combated, clothed with the lion's skin; and the Heraclidæ and Alexander delighted to array themselves in the dress of their vaunted progenitor. With this Avatar, the Satya Yug, or Saturnian age of the Hindoos, closes, comprising four Avatars; and containing, according to the computations of their sacred books, the enormous amount of one million seven hundred and twenty thousand years.

THE THREE FIRST AVATARS CONSIDERED IN RELATION TO THEIR SYMBOLICAL & ASTRONOMICAL MEANING (*concluded.*)

The agitation of the waters by the mountain Mandar being, doubtless, intended to represent the general convulsion of nature, and the labouring of the poles of the world, it was proper that a polar constellation should be introduced into the awful drama, and certainly no one constellation in the arctic region more merited this distinction than that under consideration. Vishnu, therefore, entering into this benign asterism, supported the sinking pole, convulsed by the assault of enraged demons; the rapid whirling of the mountain, allegory apart, means no more than the impetuous revolution of the earth on its axis: and the testudo being near that axis, and formerly, it is certain, still nearer to it, the earth is poetically said to be placed upon it, and to turn round it.

The Mahabbarat, from which we quoted the description of the third Avatar, is undoubtedly the oldest existing production of an historical kind in India, and may well be supposed to con-

tain many authentic documents immediately referring to the earliest events. Mr. Chambers, in the *Indian Antiquities*, gives an account of a great earthquake and convulsion, that shivered to a considerable extent and depth a rocky portion of the Coromandel coast, near the spot on which the ancient city of Mahabalipoor and the pagodas, called the seven pagodas, were erected; and intimated that the ruin was completed, according to the traditional records of the Brahmins, by a destructive inundation. The same gentleman quotes from the Mahabbarat, that a gigantic prince, or demon, the ancestor of him who founded Mahabalipoor, rolled up the earth into the form of a shapeless mass, and carried it down to the abyss, whither Vishnu followed him in the shape of a hog, killed him with his tusks, and replaced the earth in its original situation. This was considered as plainly alluding to the events of the Vara Avatar, exactly as the reader will find it in the description of the third incarnation of Vishnu already given.

In the astronomical survey of this Avatar, one circumstance is exceedingly deserving of remark, that whereas, in the Egyptian mythology, Osiris, is said to have been slain by Typhon in the month of Athyr, or November, when the sun was in Scorpio (a proof that Typhon, or the evil genius of Egypt, was intended to be designated by that symbolical asterism) so Adonis (that is the sun again), in the mythology of Syria, is said to have been killed by a boar; and though we may not be able to pierce to the bottom of this astronomical allegory in India, yet we may rest assured, that a great portion of astronomical history is included in it, from the general analogy subsisting between the mythological details of the two countries. But let us inquire more particularly into the meaning of this ingenious fable of Adonis being killed by an enraged boar. The Syrian month Haziran, in which that event happened, is derived from the Chaldaic root Hazir, or Hazira, signifying *sus*, *porcus*, a hog, and the finishing his course, or apparent annual circle, when Sirius rose heliacally, which in very ancient periods, took place in the same month; that circumstance gave birth to the ingenious allegory of the young and beautiful Adonis being killed by a boar. That this is no idle conjecture, may be proved from the ceremonious rites that took place at the great annual festival most pompously celebrated in honour of Adonis, both in Syria and Phœnicia, and which are in truth the counterpart of those of Osiris and Isis in Egypt. These are amply detailed both by Lucian and Macrobius, in the *Dea Syria* of the former, and the *Saturnalia* of the latter. The festival itself lasted eight days, during the first part of which the whole city of Byblos, near which ran the river Adonis, a river that at a certain season of the year is affirmed to have been stained of a red colour, in memory of the slain Adonis, whose wounds, inflicted by the boar, were washed in that stream, was clothed in sable, and plunged in the deepest affliction. In different quarters of the city were placed on biers, images, beautiful, but lifeless, of the youth who had thus perished by the tooth of a relentless savage, in the flower of his age. Around

these images were assembled crowds of frantic women, who, arrayed in mourning vestments, poured forth the most bitter lamentations, and occasionally sang the most doleful songs, and this first part of the solemnity was called his disappearance. These gloomy rites continued for seven days, and during that interval Adonis was supposed to have resided with Proserpine, who was also enamoured of him, in the infernal regions; but on the last, or eighth day of the festival, the universal sorrow was converted into unbounded hilarity; and the most festive and most obscene rites, of the Phallic kind, proclaimed the restoration of Adonis to the realms of life and light: this concluding part of the festival was denominated the discovery. The meaning of all this is plainly to be found in astronomical science. The loss of the sun's light, during his visit to the inferior hemisphere in the brumal season, figuratively described as a residence with Proserpine, and so similar to the slumber of Vishnu during the rainy season, and the return of his gladdening beam in the vernal quarter, are, doubtless, intended to be shadowed out in this oriental fable.

How widely throughout the East was diffused this custom of lamenting Adonis slain by the boar, or in other words, the sun finishing his apparent annual course in the month Haziran, is evident from the deep devotion of the idolatrous Jews to this ancient sidereal superstition, so frequently and expressly anathematized in the Bible.

The result of the whole of this astronomical inquiry, respecting the three first Avatars, is, that to the sun, the great but subordinate deity of India, the radiant symbol of the Supreme Being himself, to that sun passing through, or as the ancients were accustomed to express themselves, taking up his abode in any constellation or single star, and diffusing thence his vivifying, penetrating influences, they assigned the name, and even the form itself, of the animal, under whose figure the constellation was designated in the heavens; and Vishnu, therefore, successively became incarnate, and received homage in the fish, the testudo, and the boar of the sphere.

THE LIFE OF CREESHNA.

At a period when the earth was become overloaded with injustice and oppression, she assumed the form of a milch-cow,* and went to utter her complaints to the creator Brahma. Brahma, taking compassion on her, directed and accompanied her to Mahadeva, because, of the three sovereign deities that preside over the universe, Mahadeva is the avenger. When arrived at Kylas, the capital of the latter deity, before Brahma had spoken, Mahadeva, knowing the object of their visit, observed that there was a third sacred personage, the redresser of the evils of the world, and that they ought all to recollect the preserver Vishnu.† In consequence, Brahma, with Mahadeva, the milch-cow, and other attendant Devatas, repaired all together to Vaicontha, the palace of Vishnu. At their entrance a secret voice informed them their complaints should be redressed, adding, "I will become incarnate at Mathura, in the house of YADU, and will issue forth to mortal birth from the womb of Devaci. Since, in their former life, Vasudeva and Devaci ‡ have, by earnest prayer and penance, besought of me a son; and, since Nanda and Yasodha§ have merited my protection, it is time that I should display my power in that region, and relieve the oppressed earth from its load." After this declaration, Brahma, Mahadeva, with the other Devatas, and that milch-cow, which is the earth personified, departed to their respective habitations.

Mathura was, at that time, the capital of the kingdom of the Yadavas, and had, for its sovereign, a prince named CANSa, a merciless tyrant, the son of Ogur Sein, whom he had deposed, and on whose usurped throne he reigned.

* This idea is perfectly in unison with that in the Egyptian system of mythology, where Isis, the universal mother, the Dea Multimanma, was symbolized by a cow.

† Hence it is manifest that the Bhagavat was written by one of the sect of Vishnu, since this is evidently said with an intent to exalt the power and consequence of Vishnu above those of the two former deities.

‡ Creeshna's real father and mother.

§ Creeshna's foster father and mother.

Cansa, young himself, had a sister much younger, who, on being arrived at a proper age, he bestowed in marriage on a Brahmin of royal descent and eminent for his piety, whose residence was at Gokul, a city situated three cose higher on the other side of the Jumna. The bridegroom had reached his nineteenth year, the bride her twelfth, the usual period of espousal in Hindostan; both happily ignorant of the disasters that awaited their union. The most splendid preparations were made for the celebration of the marriage, and Cansa gave his sister Devaci a portion worthy of so potent a monarch. It consisted, according to the custom of the country in those periods, of four hundred stout elephants, fifteen hundred chosen horses, eighteen thousand carriages adorned with gold and jewels, beside other valuable articles, and a great sum in money. He himself, on the day of their marriage, to do them honour, sat on the same car with Vasudeva and Devaci, in the place of the driver. On their return from celebrating the nuptials, he heard a voice, saying, "Cansa, beware! the eighth son of Devaci will be your destroyer." Cansa was exceedingly alarmed at this intelligence; he let fall the reins on the neck of the horses, and, seizing Devaci by the hair of her head with one hand, drew his sword with the other, with intent to cut it off, when Vasudeva represented to him that a woman was not liable to be killed for any crime, particularly as she was his own sister. After much expostulation, Vasudeva promised, and solemnly engaged, to give up to Cansa all the children whom Devaci should bring forth, which he might have liberty to destroy for his own security. Cansa at length consented that she should live, and went directly to his palace, giving orders to keep Vasudeva and Devaci in strict confinement.

Devaci, in the course of as many years, had eight children, seven sons and one daughter. As soon as the first was born, Vasudeva himself carried it to Cansa; who, satisfied with the offer, and reflecting that it would be equally useless and unjust to destroy the first

male for the sake of the eighth, returned it to Vasudeva, who joyfully bore it away, though not without suspicion that the tyrant would alter his mind. At the same time the sage Nared came to Cansa and thus addressed him: "Why do you slumber over your own destruction? the child now dismissed perhaps may be your destroyer." Nared then went away: and Cansa, redemanding the child, instantly put it to death, in spite of the remonstrances of Ogur Sein, his mother, and the surrounding nobles. He even threw his own father into prison for opposing him, and doubled his vigilance over Vasudeva and Devaci; ordering them both into still closer confinement in the inmost apartment of a prison, only accessible through seven iron doors. In process of time Cansa, in the same manner, destroyed six of Devaci's children. When she became pregnant a seventh time, a secret voice exclaimed, "Take this FIRE of mine, which is in Devaci's womb, and carry it to Gokul, and place it in that of Roheenee, out of the reach of Cansa." When the fire of Bhagavat (the third Rama, Creeshna's elder brother) was thus transplanted from the womb of Devaci to that of Roheenee, Devaci thought she had miscarried, and this account obtained credit in the town and palace. After some time, Devaci again grew pregnant, and, by the blessing of heaven on this pregnancy, her beauty suddenly shone forth with such transcendent splendour, that Vasudeva, her husband's countenance itself, became bright, and the very wall of her chamber was illuminated. Shortly after, Brahma and Mahadeva, with a chorus of other Devatas, came thither, and, celebrating with songs the praises of Vasudeva and Devaci, exclaimed, "In the delivery of this favoured woman all nature shall have cause to exult; how ardently do we long to behold that face for the sake of which we have coursed round the three worlds." Cansa, on these auspicious signs of the pregnancy of Devaci, the report of which spread instantly through the palace, and, hearing at the same time that the faces of the father and mother were suddenly become so transcendently bright, imagined, for a certainty, that this was the child that should slay him, and consulted with

his wisest counsellors whether he should not at once destroy Devaci; but, again reflecting that it was on all accounts horrible to kill a pregnant woman, he contented himself with the fixed determination to devote the child to death the instant it was born. The tyrant of Mathura, however, was continually haunted with the idea of the eighth son, his fated destroyer; and the avenger of his crimes appeared ever in his view.

At length, in the month Bhadron, at deep midnight, on the eighth of that month, on a Wednesday, at a time when the world was distracted with tumults and contention, in the house of Vasudeva, appeared the miraculous child, the celestial phenomenon, conspicuous with eight arms. The moment Vasudeva saw the infant, his eyes were opened, he knew it to be the Almighty, and Devaci and himself immediately began their devout addresses. After some time thus employed, the Creator of the world again closed the eyes of Vasudeva's and Devaci's understanding, and they again thought that a child was born unto them. A secret voice was then heard distinctly to utter these words: "Son of Yadu, take up this child and carry it to Gokul, to the house of Nanda, where Yasodha hath this moment been delivered of a daughter, which is to be conveyed with celerity hither." Vasudeva, struck with astonishment, answered, "How shall I obey this injunction, thus vigilantly guarded and barred in by seven iron doors that prohibit all egress?" The unknown voice replied, "The doors shall open of themselves to let thee pass, and behold I have caused a deep slumber to fall upon thy guards, which shall continue till thy journey be accomplished." Vasudeva, immediately felt his chains miraculously loosened, and, taking up the child in his arms, hurried with it through all the doors, the guards being buried in profound sleep. When he came to the Jumna, the waters immediately rose up to kiss the child's feet, and then respectfully retired on each side to make way for its transportation. Vasudeva with the utmost speed proceeded in the execution of his commission, and, reaching the house of Nanda, punctually fulfilled all that he was enjoined. Yasodha, in

fact, knew not that she had been delivered of a daughter; for, the interposing deity had brought forgetfulness on her, and, when Vasudeva was gone, she took the child he had left for her son. On Vasudeva's return to the banks of the Jumna the waters miraculously divided as before, he once more passed dry-shod to the opposite shore, and, the moment he reached the chamber of his prison, the chains came again upon his feet and hands, the locks became all closed, the guards awakened, and all heard the child cry; on which, they hastened to give notice to Cansa, who immediately ran, undressed as he was, to the prison, where Devaci, with both hands, trembling, presented to him her infant. Cansa received it with a frowning and terrific countenance, and was going to dash it against the stones, when the child suddenly darted from his hands, and mounted up into the air, bedecked with all the splendid ornaments and numerous arms of a Devata, exclaiming with a loud voice, as in a flash of lightning she departed, "O Cansa! the punishment you merit in attempting my destruction awaits yourself; be assured that your destroyer also is already born." Cansa was appalled, and trembled exceedingly at beholding this miracle. After a variety of bitter and painful reflections on the instability of human affairs, he determined to release Vasudeva and Devaci from confinement; and thus terminated the events of that wonderful night!

The next morning at sun-rise Cansa summoned a council, to know what was to be done in this moment of dreadful emergency. It was resolved, that, since he was now certain by the Devata's threat that his destroyer was already born, he should cause all the young children throughout his kingdom to be slain; and, if by chance any escaped, that he then should extend his severity to the Zennarders and penitents, when undoubtedly the Devatas, their protectors, would make the discovery. It was also resolved, that soldiers should be employed in the strictest search after the concealed enemy; and that very day the cruel orders were issued. In the mean time, Nanda, who had long wished for a son, was exceedingly elated with the child left by Vasudeva, which Yasodha took

for her own, magnificently entertained all Gokul, conferred abundance of alms, worshipped all the Devatas, got together all the necessary preparations, and, by the assistance of the Divine wisdom, named the child Creeshna, because his sacred body was of a black complexion.* After the lapse of some days, Nanda, in going to Mathura on his domestic concerns, paid a visit to Vasudeva, who, after congratulating him on the birth of his son, informed him of the savage mandate issued by Cansa for destroying all the young children, and advised him to be vigilant. Nanda, alarmed at the dreadful intelligence, lost no time in settling his affairs in the city, and returned the same day to Gokul. A gigantic fiend, in the form of a woman, by name Pootna, a nurse of infant children, had obtained of Cansa permission to be the dire agent in destroying the hapless innocents; and this fury, going out of Mathura, let them suck her breasts, and killed them all with her poisoned nipples. Arriving at Gokul, she concealed her own deformed figure under that of a beautiful woman, and presented herself at Nanda's door, where stood Yasodha and Roheenee, (the supposed mother of Rama,) and they, seduced by her appearance, admitted her into the house. She immediately cast her eyes on the cradle of the young Creeshna, and began to fondle him and put her nipple into his mouth. The child, however, instantly drew it forth with such force, that blood gushed out instead of milk,† and she fell down dead at his feet. Immediately, on touching the ground, her body resumed its natural gigantic shape, and covered no less than six cose.

* More properly dark blue, the colour of all the Avatars, to mark their celestial descent.

† Thus Hercules is said to have sucked the breast of Juno with such violence, as to spill a great quantity of the milk, which, overflowing the sky, formed in it the milky way.

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THE WORLD'S PANTHEON; OR, THE PICTURE GALLERY OF SUPERSTITION.

NO. VIII.—THE FIFTH AVATAR OR INCARNATION OF VISHNU, AS BAMUN OR THE
DWARF.



The Bamun Avatar, exhibits the lesson of imperial pride and arrogance humbled by so insignificant an instrument as a mendicant dwarf. Mahali, or Maha-Bali, that is, the great Bali, had, by the usual means, (severe austerities,) obtained from Brahma, the sovereignty of the universe, or the three regions of the sky, the earth, and Patala. He was a generous and magnificent monarch; he did not oppress his subjects, nor was he guilty of any other great crimes. His ruling passion seems to have been an unwarrantable pride, that led him to look down on all created beings with supreme contempt; at the same time, he neglected to pay proper homage and render their due oblations to the Devatas. In short, in the skies he would acknowledge no superior; on the earth, he would allow of no equal; and he boasted, that, by this unlimited extent of his power, he could control

even the infernal regions, and precipitate his enemies to the abyss of hell. The Devatas, or at least their priests for them, were dreadfully incensed at being deprived of their rights, the honey, the clarified butter, the delicious fruits, and other rich offerings, that used to load their altars; and, in consequence, the former applied to Vishnu, through the mediation of Brahma, for redress. As the principal crime laid to his charge was the defrauding of those Devatas, exact retribution was resolved on in heaven, and he was doomed to be deprived of his crown, also by a species of harmless fraud, which, it seems, the Indian deity did not think it beneath him to practise on this occasion. Vishnu, descending for this purpose, became incarnate in the house of a Brahmin, venerable for years and piety, and assuming the contemptible form of a dwarf, ill appalled, and apparently destitute of all human possessions, presenting himself in a supplicating posture before the arrogant monarch, just at the period in which he had been displaying his accustomed pomp at a banquet of unbounded magnificence; but at which he had again insulted heaven by not offering the usual tithe to the ministers of the sovereign deity who bestows all things. Bali, admiring the singularity of his figure, and smiling at his deformity, but at the same time compassionating his distress, bade him ask whatsoever he desired, and his request should be granted. Bamun, with respectful diffidence, solicited only a small spot of ground, three paces in length, for the purpose of erecting upon it a hut sufficiently large to contain

himself, his books, his umbrella, and the drinking-cup and staff, which the Brahmins usually carry with them. Bali, astonished at the modesty of his request, advised him by no means to limit his demand within such narrow bounds; told him that all the kingdoms of the world were at his disposal, and that he need not be afraid of intruding upon his generosity, even though he should request ground sufficient for the erection of a large palace. "A Brahmin," replied the artful deity, "has no occasion for a splendid palace: his real wants are few, and by them his desires should be regulated. Only swear that you will grant me this humble request, and my utmost ambition is gratified." Bali, being about to confirm his promise to the mistrustful Brahmin by the usual ceremony of an oath in Hindostan, the pouring out of water from a vessel upon the hand of the person, was interrupted by the planet Venus, a male deity in India, who whispered him, that the apparently-miserable mendicant before him was Vishnu in disguise, and exhorted him to be cautious to what he pledged his solemn oath. The high-minded monarch, however, disdaining to deviate from his word, confirmed his promise with the required oath; and, bidding him stretch forth his hand, poured out upon it the sacred wave that ratified it. As the water, in a full stream, descended upon his extended hand, the form of Bamun gradually increased in magnitude, till it became of such enormous dimensions that it reached up to heaven. Then, with one stride he measured the vast globe of the earth; with the second, the ample expanse of heaven; and with the third, was going to compass the regions of Patala; when Bali, convinced that it was even Vishnu himself, fell prostrate and adored him; yielding him up, without any farther exertion, the free possession of the third region of the universe. Vishnu then took the reigns of government into his own hands; and, as an order of things, different from what had prevailed in the Satya, was to commence with the Treta-Yug, he new modelled human society: for, whereas in the former, or perfect, age all property was equally distributed among the members of each of the great tribes, and in those tribes there was no disparity of rank or degree, he divided

them into various subordinate classes, according to their talents and virtues, in an age, in which it is the belief of the Brahmins, that one third part of mankind became reprobate; consequently, by no means to be distinguished by the privileges, or continued in the possession of the advantages, enjoyed by an age when perfection universally reigned. In this Avatar, a circumstance, evidently allusive to Maha-Bali's character as an astronomer, and to the constellation Orion, in which his father, and possibly himself, was canonized, ought not to be admitted. While Vishnu was extending his foot to take in the heavenly portion of his domain, and while Maha-Bali, at length convinced who was the august person that had defrauded him of his empire, remained prostrate in humble adoration, the god Brahma came, and pouring water on the foot thus extended, it was instantly converted into the great and rapid river Ganges, which, in their mythology and on their sphere, is actually represented as gushing from the foot of Vishnu.

With respect to Maha-Bali himself, because he had not oppressed his subjects, though he had despised the gods, his crown was not wholly taken from him, but he was left for the remainder of his life in the possession of Patala, the inferior regions; and, as Patala was supposed to be on the south, because directly opposite to the north pole, where the Hindu heaven and the palace of Vishnu is placed, this circumstance may imply his deposition and banishment from Cashmere and the higher regions of Hindostan to the remote southern districts of the peninsula, where, in fact, we shall presently find ample remains both of his name and his exploits. After his decease, since his repentance was deep and sincere, Vishnu informed him that he should be received up, into heaven, and be placed there in a conspicuous and elevated situation, from which he might occasionally overlook those former subjects who had been so much the objects of his regal care. Maha-Bali, having also discovered considerable concern lest certain annual institutions, greatly to their advantage, which he had in the plenitude of his power ordained, should not be properly kept up, to quiet his apprehensions on that score, the deity farther decreed,

that he should have permission once a year, on the full moon in the month of November, to revisit earth, and see in person that they were faithfully observed.

Whoever the Bali, alluded to in this Avatar, may have been, whether of Chaldean, or merely Indian, origin, the name occurs repeatedly in the pages of the future history, and particularly in that of a celebrated dynasty, established at a very early period on the eastern coast of the peninsula, whose capital, according to a former quotation from Mr. Chambers, was Mavalipuram; which word is only a corruption by the transmutation of *b* into *v*, and the final addition *am*, usual on that coast, of Mahabalipoor, or the city of the great Bali. This city is described in the Brahmin books to have been of an immense extent, abounding with magnificent palaces and stately pagodas, long since swallowed up by the waves of the incroaching ocean, except one most august fabric, covered with sculptures of a gigantic size, representing the Avatars, and oldest Indian mythology, hewn out of the solid rock, and known to mariners by the name of the seven pagodas. The gilded summits, however, of other pagodas, submerged in its bed, have been, within the memory of the ancient inhabitants of the place, visible at low water. The city, whose ruins may thus be observed, must undoubtedly have been modern compared with the times to which I allude; yet we know it has been immemorially the custom of the Indians to build cities successively on or near the ruins of the venerated abode of their ancestors; as Delhi, for instance, ancient and modern, on those of Hastinapoor, and Lucknow on those of Owd. That the etymology of the name is rightly derived, he endeavours to prove by the circumstance, adds Mr. Chambers, that Bali is the name of a hero very famous in Hindoo legends, and so well known in those regions, that the river Mavaligonga, which waters the eastern side of Ceylon, has probably taken its name from him; since, according to the Tamulian orthography, it means the Ganges of the great Bali.* But that which places it beyond all controversy is the genealogy of Bali, to be

met with at the close of a history of the former Avatar, cited in his dissertation by Mr. Chambers, from Sanscreet authority, which expressly says, that the virtuous Pralhad, having been seated by Vishnu on the throne of his deceased father Hiranyacasipu, reigned with mildness, and by his piety exhibited a perfect contrast to the character of his father; that he himself left a son, named Nama-chee, who inherited both his power and his virtues, and was the father of Bali, the founder of Mahabalipoor: a city so ancient as to be mentioned in two lines of the Mahabharat, which expressly fix its situation to have been

South of the Ganges two hundred yogan,
Five yogan westward from the eastern sea.*

The yogan, taken at its lowest calculation, is a measure of nine miles; and, by the latter line, the Brahmins seem willing to inculcate, that the sea has receded from that coast forty-five miles, and which may probably be as precisely true as the former, which, according to that calculation, would place it far south of Ceylon. That considerable recession, however, of the waters of the ocean has taken place is extremely probable, and, indeed, evident to the eye that only superficially contemplates this spot of stupendous ruins.

Of the race of Bal there also anciently existed a famous dynasty of Rajahs in the northern region of Hindostan. They were sovereigns of Lahore for many centuries prior to the Mohammedan irruptions, and there we find them, at the period of those irruptions, recorded by the Arabian historians to have been possessed of an empire extending from Cashmere, in the north, to the borders of the southern ocean; themselves distinguished by the highest personal bravery, and their armies remarkable for their number and discipline.

With respect to that peculiar circumstance, recorded in the above Avatar, that Bali, after his exaltation to heaven, that is the sphere, (the Hindoo heaven,) should have permission to overlook his vast empire, and even revisit the earth on the full of the moon in the month of November, it exhibits still stronger additional testimony of the connection of their astronomical and civil history. Orion, it will be remembered, is one of

* Asiatic Researches, vol. i. p. 147.

* Asiatic Researches, vol. i. p. 155.

the largest and most brilliant constellations of the north pole, that conspicuously overlooks the Higher Asia; and Mr. Sonnerat * informs us, that in November, the Hindoos celebrate, by a splendid festival, this conquest of Bali by Vishnu: they light up vast fires on that day, and illuminate their houses by night; because, they assert, Bali instituted the feasts of fire, that is the solstitial fires; like those which the Druids anciently lighted up at the solstices in these kingdoms, a custom derived to them from their ancestors, the Belidæ; in truth, the immediate descendants of this very Bali. The Persians, too, according to Mr. Richardson, in the following extract, have immemorially kept up, towards the close of the year, a feast of fire.

"The anniversary of the great festival of fire among the ancient Persians was called Sheb-Seze, when their temples were illuminated, and large piles of fire blazed all over the kingdom; round which the people entertained themselves all night with choral dances, and various amusements peculiar to the season.

* Sonnerat's Voyages, vol. i. p. 140. Calcutta edition.

Amongst other ceremonies common on this occasion, there was one which, whether it originated in superstition or caprice, seems to have been singularly cruel and pernicious. The kings and great men used to set fire to large bunches of dry combustibles, fastened round wild beasts and birds, which being then let loose, the air and earth appeared one great illumination; and, as those terrified creatures naturally fled to the woods for shelter, it is very easy to conceive that conflagrations, which would often happen, must have been peculiarly destructive, where a people considered the extinguishing of fire by water as one of the highest acts of impiety."*

The reason of this feast being kept in India in November, arose probably because Orion, setting cosmically in that month, was thought by the ancient astronomers to engender storms and tempests; whence that constellation is called, by the Roman poets, *Nimbosus*, *Sævus*, *Infestus*; and the observance of his institution at that particular period might be intended to soften the malignity and avert the vengeance of the genius of that orb.

* Richardson's Dissertations, p. 185.

THE LIFE OF CREESHNA.*

PART I.—CONTAINING THE EXPLOITS OF CREESHNA DURING HIS INFANCY AND YOUTH, TILL THE DEATH OF CANSÀ, THE TYRANT KING OF MATHURA (*continued*).

At her death the heavens and the earth resounded. The men of Gokul employed labourers to cut the body limb from limb with sharp weapons, and burnt it with faggots, collected together with great difficulty, from the number requisite for its consumption. The smoke that ascended from the pile perfumed the whole neighbourhood; for, having been slain by Creeshna, his touch gave her body the fragrance of the richest aromatics, and secured her mookt, or eternal beauty. Nature felt the shock of Pootna's fall, and, while the inhabitants of Gokul were stricken with wonder and affright, Yasodha, astonished, beheld her young infant playing on the breast of the dead monster. She instantly ran

and snatched him away, and began to pray to all the Devatas to protect him. Cansà, when he heard that a sucking child had slain Pootna, was terribly alarmed, and again summoned a council, at which, a Zinnardar, named Seedher, engaged to slay both Ram and Creeshna. Accordingly he went to Gokul, and was there most kindly received by Yasodha: he immediately entreated to see the children: Yasodha desired him to wait till they awoke, and till she should return from bathing in the Jumna. This was the very opportunity he wished for, to destroy the child in the mother's absence. With that fell intent he advanced towards Creeshna's cradle; but the child exclaimed, "Ha! are you coming to kill me? and, starting up in his cradle, seized the assassin by the two hands, and, though he would

* The above is taken from the Bhagavat Purana.

not kill him, disjointed him in such a manner that he fell to the ground like a dead tree, utterly deprived of speech. Creeshna returned to his cradle, and, after rubbing some bream in his mouth, lay down again as composed as if nothing had happened. In this state was the Zinnardar found by Yasodha, but, as he was speechless, he could only point towards the cradle. Yasodha immediately conceived that he was an emissary sent by Cansa to dispatch the child, and, calling aloud for assistance, thrust him out of the town.

In Nanda's court-yard there by chance stood a large carriage, on which Yasodha placed the child's cradle; and, as soon as he was asleep, busied herself in some other affairs of her farm. When the child awoke, it cried for victuals; and, becoming impatient, began to kick most violently, and presently kicked the carriage all to pieces. Nanda, coming back soon after, conceived that the child had escaped some other great calamity; nor would he believe the other children, playing near the spot, who told him the infant had done it; but again distributed abundance of alms for his son's escape.

One day, Ternaveret, a raksha, by order of Cansa, went to Gokul; and first raised such a tempest, that the whole place was involved in midnight darkness: then, assuming the form of a whirlwind, he carried Creeshna up aloft into the air. During the consternation, occasioned by this circumstance, Nanda and Yasodha saw the raksha fall suddenly to the ground, with a noise like the fall of Pootna, and Creeshna playing on his breast, whence Nanda instantly snatched him away. Another day, as Yasodha was fondling and kissing her dear infant, he opened his mouth, and she saw therein the heavens and the earth, the sun and moon, sea and land, the mountains and valleys of the whole world. She was astonished, and began to think herself seized with sudden insanity; nor afterwards could she tell what to make of this wonderful child; but, from that day, took him to all the doctors and magicians, adorned his neck with amulets, had him charmed, and collected together a great quantity of tigers' claws and bears' hair to drive away impending danger.

Cansa still offering great rewards for the extermination of Creeshna, a certain

Ditya, assuming the figure of a huge crow, promised the king to destroy both the children by pecking out their eyes; but they soon squeezed it to death, and threw the corpse to the ground; while a great noise was heard like thunder, so that all the people in the neighbourhood, being alarmed, flew with speed to the spot, wondering who had killed this crow, and whence had proceeded the noise. Vasudeva, in constant fear of Cansa, had sent Roheenee, as soon as she proved pregnant, to Gokul, and concealed the circumstance of her having been delivered of a son. One day, he requested of Nared and Garga, two celebrated prophets and astrologers, to go to Gokul, to cast the nativity of the child, (Ram,) and give him a name; acquainting them, at the same time, with his apprehensions concerning Cansa. Nanda, at Gokul, gave the seers a most welcome reception; when Garga informed him, they were sent by Vasudeva to give a name to Roheenee's child. Nanda wished them also to give a name to his child. Nared, having calculated the horoscope for Roheenee's son, named him Ram; and said, men would also call him Bali, on account of his superior strength. He then cast his eyes on Creeshna's stars, and presently pronounced that he was not the son of Nanda, but of Vasudeva and Devaci; expressing at the same time his wonder at Devaci's having a daughter, when he knew of her pregnancy. He insisted that this must be Devaci's eighth son, and the daughter, Nanda's child; nor could he be prevailed upon to give him any other name. The hoary priest, with his comrade, after this solemn declaration, returned to Mathura. Mean time, the two children always remained inseparable, and learned to walk together, either round their beds, or by holding a calf's tail in their hands. Creeshna, in particular, grew daily more and more in favour with the Gopias, or milk-maids, of Nanda's farm, and became extremely fond of playing them tricks; spilling their milk, stealing their cream, and always making cunning escapes, or shuffling excuses: so that Nanda's house resounded with their complaints. Yet still they were all in love with the wanton little urchin. One day, Belender, with Soodata, Sheedarman, and other herdsmen, came and told Yasodha, that

Creeshna had eaten up all the curd, which extremely incensed that prudent dame. But Creeshna denied the fact, and desired her to look in his mouth; which she did, by opening it with one hand, and holding both his in her other. She there, a second time, to her utter astonishment, saw the whole world displayed; and then at length her mind became enlightened, and she knew him to be the almighty. However, Creeshna, knowing the time was not yet arrived for the awful discovery, clouded her understanding again, and she conceived him really and properly her son.

Creeshna now grew apace; and one day was playing about in his mother's arms, while she was making butter out of the cream; but, accidentally, a pot of milk boiling over, she put away the child to take care of the pot. Creeshna, thinking she liked the milk better than himself, threw all the cream down; and, seeing his mother angry, affected to run away, the mother pursuing him till she was quite out of breath; at length, the amiable and affectionate child, perceiving that she tired herself in the pursuit, suffered her to catch him. She then endeavoured to tie the hands of the little urchin; but all the string she had or could procure would not suffice, till at length he himself permitted it to be enough.

As some new evil seemed every day to threaten them, the men of Gokul came to a resolution of quitting the place, and Nanda advised them to move to Binderaben, an excellent spot, and close to the mountain Goverdhana. Accordingly, finding a lucky moment, they mounted their goods on carriages and departed with their cattle; and, on their arrival there, they unloaded their goods and made an enclosure with the carriages. Creeshna was at this time about five years old, and was sent into the field to attend the calves to pasture. One day, by order of Cansa, Vetes Assoor Ditya came thither, in form of a three-years-old cow, and attempted to molest Creeshna. The omniscient child soon knew it not to be a cow, and asked his brother Balhadur Rama if he knew who it was; then, putting his hand on one horn and holding by the other, he threw it on the ground with such violence that it was killed by the blow, and he returned to his play with the other cow-herds. Ano-

ther day, Pek Assoor Ditya came thither, and sitting on the bank of the Jumna, waited for Creeshna's coming, to swallow him up like a fish. The cow-keepers coming thither found this Pek Assoor, like a huge alligator, lying on the river's side, and told Creeshna; who, on seeing it, knew it to be Pek Assoor, and not a fish. Immediately on his coming near, the alligator seized him with his jaws, and swallowed him, rejoicing that now he had accomplished the ardent desire of his sovereign. But Creeshna began to burn the entrails of the finny monster, so that he had no power to retain his prey, but threw up Creeshna again from his mouth. Still wishing to seize him again, he stretched out his snout, when Creeshna, seizing the two parts with his two hands, tore his jaws asunder, and then bathed in the river in great tranquillity. The cow-keepers on returning home told all these things to Nanda, and all men observed that these calamities pursued Creeshna; but concluded, that, as his destiny had saved him from Pootna, so it would continue to preserve him in all other cases.

It was customary with Creeshna, the cow-keepers, and herds, to wander sometimes about the mountain Goverdhana and sometimes in Binderaben. One day, at the instigation of Cansa, Aghe Assoor Ditya came to revenge the death of his brothers, Vetes Assoor, and Pek Assoor, and, assuming the shape of a dragon, sat at the end of a road. One of his jaws touched the ground and the other was stretched up to the clouds, while his mouth yawned like the pass in a mountain. Creeshna, Belhadur, and the others, soon came that way, to his great joy. As none but Creeshna, knew what it was, but thought the object before them to be a hollow way, one and all with their herds went into the dragon's mouth, and Creeshna pitying their situation followed them. At that time Devatas, Veedhyadhers, Deivis, and Rackshas, hovered in the air to behold the event; the two first in great anxiety lest Creeshna and the rest should be destroyed, and the Deivis and Rakshas exulting from their attachment to Cansa. Creeshna, though a child, made himself so large and ponderous, and so fastened his body in the monster's throat, that he could not bring his jaws together, and the whole passage was blocked up in

such a manner, that no breath could escape; while his soul, being straightened with the pain, fled from the body of the dragon, and began to turn in the air like a flame of fire. The Devatas in transport sang Jeye! Jeye! and rained flowers; that flame of fire coming back was extinguished in Creeshna's mouth, and the whole company with their herds came out of the dragon, and returned safely home to their usual occupations. The dragon's body drying remained a long time in that place like a mountain, and the children used to play upon it; but his soul obtained liberation through Creeshna. Creeshna observed to the other cow-boys that this dead dragon was of great use to them on the banks of the river, where before there was only plain ground, either for the purpose of playing upon, or of looking from that eminence after the stray cattle. Happy, happy, envied cow-boys! who, day and night, enjoyed the company of Creeshna, and partook of his food and shared his affection!

It happened one day, while they were altogether sitting in the shade, that the calves strayed away; Creeshna immediately promised to collect them and bring them back; but, mounting up into a tree, he could not obtain a sight of them. The fact was, that on that day evil suggestions had seized Brahma's mind,* who could not reconcile to himself that the Devatas should all take this child, who had slain Pek Assoor and Aghe Assoor, for the creator of the world; and, by way of trial, he determined to steal away both cattle and boys; being convinced, that Creeshna, if he were the almighty, could soon create others. Accordingly he stole them all away, and hid them in a cave of the mountain quite inaccessible. Creeshna, after a little reflection, discovered this crafty trick of Brahma; and immediately, by his power, created other calves and boys, in all things, as well in temper as external marks, perfect resemblances of the others, which he carried to the place where they had been sitting, and at night they went home with him as usual. The cows all took them for

their own calves, and ran to meet them and give them milk, and fondly licked them. The fathers and mothers also of the children took each, respectively, for their own; so that not the least suspicion of the counterfeit arose among them: nay, the maternal and filial affections were even greater than before. An entire year passed in this manner; when one day, the milch-cows, grazing by the mountain where Brahma had concealed the calves, heard the lowing of their own offspring; at an unusual time of the day, began to give down their milk to their young. Brahma was astonished at the circumstance, and did not know whether they were newly-created calves, or those he had stolen; nor could he, after the closest examination, perceive any difference between them. His senses were for a time totally lost in amazement, and strayed from his body. Sometimes he thought that he saw all the cow-boys of the form and colour of Creeshna; and, at others, he seemed to behold Brahma and Mahadeva, and all the Devatas, in praises and adoration, standing before each cow-boy. Thus having for a time been deprived of intellect, as a punishment for his temerity, Brahma at length returned to his senses, as if he had awaked from sleep; and, rubbing his eyes and starting from his place, came and prostrated all his four heads at Creeshna's feet, in a fit of the deepest repentance. Nor could Creeshna for a time mitigate the severe sense of shame which he experienced from the remembrance of his past folly. Brahma now commenced a long oration in apology for his conduct; and, after a multitude of excuses, the calves which had been created instead of those he had stolen, and which he saw before his eyes, disappeared; and, though one entire year had elapsed during this degraded state of Brahma, it seemed to be no more than a moment since it happened: for, notwithstanding this presumptuous idea of trying Creeshna's omnipotence arose on Aghe Assoor's being slain, he, at this very moment, beheld the spot of ground where Creeshna had been sitting and eating with the other cow-boys, he saw him now in the act of collecting together the calves, and he heard the cow-boys, on their seeing Creeshna, calling out to him to make haste, adding, that they had not tasted any thing during his absence. Creeshna after

* The reader will be pleased constantly to bear in mind, that the Bhagavat is the production of one of the sect of Vishnu, anxious to exalt the peculiar deity of his devotion above Brahma and Mahadeva.

this dismissed Brahma in comfort, and he himself sat down and finished his meal with the boys, returned homeward with them in the evening, and by the way began to play on his flute, when men, and birds, and beasts, and Devatas, were ravished with pleasure. The Gopias, when he came near their habitations, all ran out and stood in the road to hear him, and tears of pleasure fell from their eyes, while their hearts yearned towards the gentle Creeshna.—The rajah here interrupted the narration, and asked of Sekedeva, Why did the Gopias prefer Creeshna to their property and their children? Sekedeva answered, "There is nothing in the world dearer than property and children, except life, and, therefore, Vishnu Perebrahm, which is in our bodies, is most dear. When a person is in pain, will he look to his wealth and children instead of procuring ease to his soul? Therefore Creeshna is the soul of all the world, and nothing is so dear as the soul."

Thus Creeshna, though only five years old, amused himself, and Balhadur, his brother, and the other cow-boys, with all sorts of children's sports when they ranged together in the woods or on the banks of the ponds. One day a cow-boy professed a desire to go and eat the delicious fruits of the TAL ben, but had heard that it was haunted by a raksha named Dhenek, whose dreadful character for rapacity and cruelty prevented all persons from going thither. Creeshna, however, led them to the ben, and they all began to gather the fruit, when the noise they made among the dry leaves awakened the raksha, who was sleeping there in the form of a wild ass. Immediately starting up, he ran towards them with his attendants, ploughing up the earth with his hoofs and teeth, and coming up to Balhadur, who was first, struck with his two fore-feet on his breast, and, retreating, endeavoured to repeat his blow; but Balhadur, with one of his hands, caught both the fore-feet of the raksha, lifted him in the air, and, swinging him over his head, threw him on the ground with such force that his soul fled from his body. After which Balhadur and Creeshna each killed a number of the species of the wild animal whose body that soul had animated. The cow-boys afterwards, in perfect security, plucked

as much fruit as they chose, and returned home.

An infinite variety of these adventures caused the name of Creeshna to be venerated by the good, and terrible to the wicked. Monsters in nature and monsters out of nature were perpetually conjured up to attack the divine infant, who, with ease, discomfited them all, and gained new glory from every fresh combat. At length the great envenomed serpent KALLI NAGA (literally *black or evil spirit*) determined to try his strength with him, and, with his enormous bulk took possession of the river Jumna, in whose bed he lay concealed, and whose stream he poisoned. The instant that the cattle tasted the water, they fell down dead on the banks, and the cow-boys, going in the evening to bathe in the river, as soon as they were immersed and their lips touched the flood, they also expired. Creeshna, being informed of this dreadful calamity, immediately hastened down to the river-side, and, by his omniscient power, soon discovered the cause. As his former companions lay dead in multitudes around him, he was filled with compassion at their untimely fate, and, *casting upon them an eye of divine mercy*, they immediately arose, and, with looks of astonishment, inquired what disaster had befallen them, and what enchantment had deprived them of their senses and recollection? He restored also the cattle to life, and all, when evening approached, went quietly home to their several occupations at Nanda's farm.

In the meantime, the passage of the river being obstructed by the recumbent serpent, and extirpation threatened both to men and beasts by the poisoned waters, Creeshna determined at all events to attack the usurper, and clear the river of its deadly infection. He assumed no other appearance than that infantine one which naturally belonged to him in the assumed veil of mortality; nor armed himself with any other panoply than the sacred *chank*, and the innocence of a child. The next morning, therefore, at a time when Balhadur was not with them, he went with the other boys and the cows and calves to the side of the river, where the serpent was sleeping; and getting up into a palm-tree on the river's side, he began clapping his hands so violently, and sounded the

sacred shell so loud, that the old serpent awoke, and lifted up his heads to see who it was that had the insolence to disturb him. Creeshna leapt from the tree into the water, and dashed it about violently with his two hands. The Devatas, alarmed by the noise, came to behold the spectacle. The serpent vomitted streams of fire from his mouth and nostrils, aimed at once a thousand bites with his thousand heads, and twisted his enormous folds round Creeshna's whole body. On seeing this, the cow-boys fell down in despair. The unhappy omen was soon published throughout Gokul and the farm. Roheenee, and Yasodha, and all the men and women, immediately hastened together to the spot by the tracts of the cows and calves; and, as they did not observe Creeshna among the cow-boys, eagerly inquired of them where he was; but they were so utterly absorbed in grief and apprehension that they returned no answer. This silence threw the whole multitude into complete despair, and they fell prostrate to the ground. Balhadur, however, came at last, and he consoled the Gopas and Gopias, by assuring them that Creeshna would overcome this the greatest of all dangers with the same ease as he had that of Pootna, Ternaveret, and other Dityas and Rakshas. Creeshna, at length, seeing they were all come thither out of their exteme anxiety on his account, to relieve them, took hold of the serpent's heads, one after another; and, tearing them from his body, set his foot on them, and began to dance in triumph on each of them. The monster struggled in vain; and, after expending all his poison, found himself totally overwhelmed by the superior power of his antagonist, who might properly be called the strength of the world. The wife of the serpent, and his children, (for, all the gods, superior and inferior, of India, are married,) now came to the water-side, and entreated Creeshna to release him, acknowledging that they knew the Saviour of the world to have been born in Gokul; and that he, who is under his foot, whether as a friend or an enemy, has by that circumstance, secured his liberation. They plead the serpent's malignant disposition and constitution to have been given him by Creeshna himself; and among other apologies, observe, that, in consequence of this event,

the name of Kalli-Naga will subsist to the end of the world, since each of his heads has been honoured with a touch of Creeshna's foot. Creeshna at length took pity on the serpent's wife and children; and said to him, "Begone quickly into the abyss; this place is not proper for thee. Since I have combated with thee, thy name shall remain during all the period of time; and Devatas and men shall henceforth remember thee without dismay." So the serpent, with his wife and children, went into the abyss; and all that water, which had been infected by his poison, became pure and wholesome.

After this victory, Creeshna came out of the water, in external appearance shuddering and shivering like a child, and clung close to his mother's side. Yasodha and all the Gopias were extremely alarmed, except only Balhadur, who was smiling. Nanda remarked this, and concluded that he would not have smiled if there had been any real danger. On asking him, he replied, "That he laughed to think Creeshna was totally fearless while treading on the serpent's thousand heads with his feet, yet now stood trembling by the side of his mother." Suddenly, at midnight, they found themselves in the midst of a fire which had seized the jungle on all sides of them, so that there seemed no way for them to escape its fury. They were all quickly roused, and their whole care was how to save Creeshna. He, knowing their thoughts, took all the fire into his mouth and swallowed it, and no one knew how it was extinguished, but all thought it had died away of itself. After returning thanks to God for their delivery, they went in the morning to Bindrèben to their usual occupations.

While Creeshna and the other children were amusing themselves with sports suitable to their age, a certain gigantic Ditya assumed the figure of a young child, and mixed with them, undiscovered by all but Creeshna, who told Ram of it. They then proposed a play, in which the conquerors should ride on the backs of the losers, and Ram was in one party and Creeshna in the other. Ram's party conquered, and each mounted upon his fellow. Ram rode upon the giant, who, now thinking the day was gained, mounted up into the air with Ram on his back, and assumed his

natural shape, while all the others went towards Bindreben. Ram, having been forwarned by Creeshna, was not alarmed, but on the contrary, rendered himself, so heavy, that the Ditya could no longer support him, and Ram striking him some blows at the same time with his fist, the Ditya fell to the ground; and the children were not arrived at Bindreben when they were made happy by this spectacle, and praised Ram for having so opportunely avenged his wicked intentions.

One day, while Creeshna and his companions had been playing in the wood, the cows strayed so far in feeding, that they could not be found; but Creeshna mounted a high tree, and, calling each cow with a loud voice by her own name, collected them all together; but as the party were going home, on a sudden they found themselves in the face of a mighty conflagration, which came on them as swift as a horse in full gallop. Immediately they flew to their known protector, Creeshna, who told them to shut all their eyes while he thought of a remedy; and, in an instant, on his bidding them open them again, they saw neither the fire nor the same place in Bindreben. The cows were where they had been all mustered, and they kept their way homeward. When they came near to Bindreben, the sound of Creeshna's flute struck the ears of the Gopias; all came to the end of the road to wait for him; for, they had determined not to eat any food till they should see the ease-inspiring countenance of Bhagavat. When their several children arrived, they demanded of them why they had made their return so late? They answered, that they had that day escaped a great calamity; having been in danger of a dreadful fire, which Creeshna's power had extinguished. The Gopias immediately went to Nanda's house with this account, but Yasodha paid no credit to it, as not thinking it possible for children to operate such miracles.

When the hot wind had passed away, and the season of Beresat (spring) came on; when the earth re-assumed its green livery, and the bow of heaven beamed benediction on the human race; at this beautiful season, and in a place where nature had lavished all her charms, did Creeshna amuse himself sometimes with

the veena and sometimes with his flute, so that the waters stood still to hear him, and the birds lost the power over their wings. The Gopias, who at that time were in Berjepooree, were all fascinated with the sound; and, coming out of their doors, assembled tumultuously together with the most ardent desire to behold him. With one voice they exclaimed, "O that flute of heavenly fabrication is above all eulogy! O the happiness of that reed which rests on his divine lip, and from which he produces those heavenly sounds which steal away the souls from Soors and Assoors, from Mena and Eendra! On hearing its bewitching notes, the daughters of the Devatas came also to the spot; and, standing with their hands joined together where Creeshna was attending the cattle remained motionless before him. The cows dropped the grass and corn from their mouths on hearing the tunes he played; and the calves, forgetting their want of nutrition, let go the dugs from their mouths, and the milk dropped upon the ground. Exactly in the same state were the fawns and other animals standing near him; while Devatas, Rcyshces, and Peetrees, all stricken with rapture, fell down senseless beside him. In this happy season did Creeshna bestow joy and satisfaction on all living creatures, and often as he touched his flute in the presence of the adoring Gopias, one exclaimed, "Happy animals, inhabiting Berjeben, who enjoy the sight of Creeshna!" Another said, "O favoured stream of Jumna, and other transparent pools and fountains, whence Creeshna deigns to drink!" Another said, "O happy trees of this wood, under whose thick shade Creeshna delights to slumber!" Another exclaimed, "Melodious above all is the flute which resides for ever on his lip!" Another said, "Honoured above all existing animals are these cattle which the Creator himself leads to pasture!" Thus did the Gopias plunge into the fathomless ocean of love, and admire him who had on a yellow robe, a peacock's feather on his head, a brilliant rosary round his neck, and a flute on his lip, and they said to each other, "How happy are we whom he condescends to love!" In short, by their purity of faith and zeal of attachment, their hearts, at length, become

illuminated, and they knew and comprehended that Creeshna was the Creator of the world.

Once a year the Gopas and Gopias were accustomed to celebrate a Yug, in honour of Eendra. When the anniversary came, Nanda and all the rest made their preparations accordingly, and collected together a great quantity of money, and a variety of articles, for the purpose. While this was doing, Creeshna came into their assembly, and very dutifully requested of his father and the other heads of the place to tell him wherefore all these things were collected, since the young could only receive instructions from the aged? Nanda answered, that all these articles would be expended on a Yug, in honour of Eendra; by whose propitiation rain would descend on the earth, to revive the vegetables, and refresh man and beast. Creeshna next, with many apologies, begged leave to ask whether any rain fell in those places where men omitted to propitiate Eendra? But not one of them chose to answer.* He then added that rain fell by the power of the Almighty: that men must be exceedingly weak and forgetful not to address themselves to that Being, of whom Eendra himself stood in need. That good and evil, ease and difficulty, pleasure and pain, were the lot of each individual, as the Creator ordained; and Eendra had nothing to do with it. He therefore very submissively proposed, that all these preparations, which had cost so much trouble in collecting, should be distributed among the Brahmins; that part should be given for food to the cows, and the remainder to the necessitous of every description; and he assured them their affairs would not fail to prosper, even more than in other years. This proposal was greatly admired by the wiser part of the assembly; but those, who were of more confined notions, wondered that a child should presume to interfere with the concerns of the Devatas. However, in the end, the contriver of all affairs succeeded in persuading them to adopt his proposition; so that, getting together their best apparel, and ornamenting

the horns and bodies of their cows, they went to the mountain Goverdhana; and, going three times the circuit of the mountain, ate the feast. Creeshna, unperceived, took the first morsel and put it to his mouth, and said, "May Brahma, Vishnu, Mahadeva, and all the Devatas of the three worlds, be satisfied herewith." The instant in which he put the morsel to his mouth, it extended to all the existences of all the worlds, just as water, poured out on the root of a tree, extends its refreshing moisture to all the leaves and branches.

As the men of the Ben neglected the Yug that year, in honour of Eendra, and as Eendra knew it was at the instigation of Creeshna, he thought it necessary to bring them back to their duty by severity; conceiving Creeshna to have been no more than a mortal, and meaning to put him to shame. Accordingly, summoning the guardian spirit of rain, he ordered him to let loose the rain that was reserved for the day of judgment, and to send such a storm for seven days and nights successively, that all the men and beasts of the place should be drowned; but to take care that it did not rain in any other part. Accordingly on the same instant began a most violent storm of rain, falling in vast torrents, with hail like large stones, and most terrific thunder. The men of the Ben, in agony, called on Creeshna, who desired them all to get on the mountain Goverdhana, and take refuge in a cave there, with their cattle and effects: which they did. Creeshna then lifted up the mountain on his little finger, with as much ease as if it had been a lotos, and held it up above the storm; so that the inhabitants were perfectly secure. Eendra, finding his anger took no effect, at length discovered, to his infinite shame and mortification, that Creeshna was the Almighty; and that he had been utterly deceived in supposing him a human creature. So he caused the storm to cease, not without violent apprehensions on his own account. Creeshna, when the rain was over, restored the mountain to its place.

The men of the Ben then left Goverdhana, and went home, wondering how a child of seven years old could perform such miracles, assuring themselves he must be Perebrahme; re-

* This apparently is an imitation, by means of the spurious Gospels, of Christ in his infancy disputing among the doctors.

counting all his feats from the time he was one year old; and telling Nanda that he never could be his child, but must be he who is exempt from both birth and death. Nanda replied, "It must be so;" for, at the period of naming him, the venerable priest Garga told me, "This child is the Almighty Creator, who hath before taken different bodies of a red colour, of white, of yellow, and of black, in his various incarnations, and who now again hath assumed a black colour, since in black all other colours are absorbed; and this child is the son of Vasudeva, for which reason he shall be called Vasudeva, and shall also assume a different name, according to his several feats. He shall remove all grief and trouble from the Gopias and cowherds; and doubtless this is Bhagavan." From that day, Nanda and the rest gave credit to what the young boys had related of Creeshna, which they before deemed incredible. Eendra, extremely abashed at his own ignorance and presumption, threw himself to the ground from off his lofty elephant Iravut; and, taking with him the cow Kamdeva, prostrated himself at Creeshna's feet in an agony of shame, and made the most submissive apologies. Creeshna easily forgave him; and, after a lecture, in which he told him, that he, Creeshna, was the same who is called by some the Almighty Power, and by others Necessity, and by others Fate, or Predestination, bid him go home. Iravut and Kamdeva, who stood by, burst out in accents of praise and thanksgiving. The Kinnars and Gandharves who accompanied Eendra rained flowers without number, cows out of joy dropped their milk, trees and shrubs acquired new leaves, the water of the river dashed its waves with transport, and rubies and diamonds were found at its bottom.

Eendra went away on the 10th day of the moon; Nanda fasted on the 11th; and on the 12th, at day-break, went to bathe in the Jumna. When he went in, the guardians of the stream, who are the servants of the Devata Varuna, hurried him away under water. As Nanda delayed so very long his return home, his people went out and searched for him every where, but in vain. Ram, too, and Roheence, and Yasodha, anxiously explored every place for him, and Creeshna offered to do so also. After a

a little reflection, Creeshna found that he was under water, and plunged after him into the stream. Varuna, and the other Devatas who were in Patal, (Hades,) learning Creeshna's approach, came with reverence to salute him, while the former wondered to see the Devatas of Patal fall at his son's feet. Varuna now made many entreaties for pardon for his servants' error in bringing Nanda thither. Creeshna smiled benevolently; and, taking Nanda by the hand, led him back to the terrestrial region from his watery abode: nor did Nanda recollect any of the circumstances that had passed under water, but as a dream. Great rejoicings were made on his return.

At a season of just and delicious temperature of weather, on a certain beautiful evening, Creeshna came to Bindraben. The Devatas, in honour of the moon shining in its meridian lustre, had adorned themselves in variegated chains of pearls and rubies, had robbed themselves in vestments of a rose-colour, and rubbed themselves with saffron, so that the earth received fresh splendour from their appearance, and a warm and sweet air breathed around, when Creeshna began to play on his flute. Immediately on hearing it, the Gopias all left their several occupations unfinished, and ran out to listen: even those, whose husbands or parents forbade them, sent their hearts and souls to the place whence the sound proceeded; and thus enflamed with passion, and hurried away from themselves by the ardor of desire, they became worthy of eternal liberation. Creeshna seeing the Gopias there, affected to ask them, "If all was not well at home? That they had come out thither, at night, too, when it was neither usual nor decent for women to leave their houses. If the serenity of the night, which is the promoter of desire, had tempted them thither, they ought to direct those desires towards their husbands, and so obtain at once physical and mental satisfaction. If they should say they came to see him, it was well. He had a due regard for the good will of his friends, but he advised them, by all means to return directly home, as all dutiful wives should do, to their husbands, and not risk their comfort in this world, and happiness in the next, by slight or ill conduct towards them; since the Vedas, which are the

very words of God, declare that a husband, however defective or criminal, is in the place of the Almighty to his wife, therefore they must immediately go home.* This speech threw them all into despair, which they manifested by all manner of incoherences. One of them even said, that, "When frenzy and distraction seized the mind, all duties and all worldly motives were overturned and forgotten: and that, as they were altogether intoxicated by the sound of his flute, it was in vain to preach up to them their duty or their attachments to their husbands. That they well knew that those who would profess an attachment to him must renounce all other connections, as they did, and that they knew him to be Bhagavan Perebrahme; that, if he ordered them to go, they were lame, and their feet would not stir; but, if he called them to him, they flew. That, in short, separate himself as much as he would, corporally, he could not escape from their hearts and minds." Creeshna, perceiving them thus sincerely inflamed, would not be too harsh with them, but took each of them in his arms, and treated them with equal tenderness and familiarity; so that, at length, all the happiness and transport that are to be found in the world were collected into one place, in the hearts of the Gopias. Wherever they turned, Creeshna was close to them; and, as women naturally acquiesce in the truth of an idea that pleases them, they concluded Creeshna to be equally fond of them, when, on a sudden, he totally disappeared from among them.

When Creeshna had thus vanished, the Gopias, like a stag strayed from the herd, stared round them on every side in extreme astonishment and despair. They became at once utterly bereaved of sense and reflection, and demanded news from Creeshna from everything they saw: not a tree or flower that they passed was uninterrogated. At last they addressed the earth, so often ennobled by the touch of his foot. "The earth," said they, "certainly enjoyed his regard; for, he it was who, when

Hirinakassap* had driven it to Patal with a spurn of his foot, brought it up again on his tusk, and he demanded nothing else but the earth of Rajah Bali,† and completely engrossed it to himself before he had finished his three steps: therefore the earth," they argued, "could not be ignorant where he was." While they were thus raving and looking wildly about, one of them espied the print of Creeshna's foot in the sand, and immediately they all set out to follow that tract; and, while thus agitated between hope and despair, they espied another print of his foot, and with it that of a woman. This increased their love and sorrow by the addition of excessive jealousy. They soon came to the green turf where they footsteps could no longer be traced, and they wandered about dejected and forlorn; when, on a sudden, they saw a woman whom they immediately knew for the late companion of Creeshna, and, on asking her where he was, they found that she too was still more a prey to the most poignant grief for his absence, and she united her sorrows to the rest. At length, one of them proposed to cease all this idle search and fruitless wandering, and sit down together to feed their passion by relating the actions of Creeshna's childhood. Accordingly they sat down in the very place where he had left them, and began to act over again all his mischievous tricks and miracles: the throwing down of the milk, and obstruction of the process of making the butter; afterwards the killing of Pek Assoor and Vetes Assoor. Then one made an image of the shape of the mountain Goverdhana by a cloth on a shalee, and another, tinging herself with the colour of Creeshna, held it up on her finger; and, in short, they had so heated their imaginations, that the trembling of a leaf made them look anxiously on all sides to see if Creeshna were not coming. In truth, so transported were they with grief and affection, that they no longer knew where they were or what they were doing. Creeshna at last took pity on the grief and despair of the Gopias, and suddenly appeared among them, nor did they know which way he came. They first all offered

* This doctrine, suitable enough to the despotism of the East, will not gain Creeshna many female admirers in European regions.

* Referring to the Vara Avatar.

† Alluding to the Bamun Avatar.

him worship with flowers; then one took the lotos he had in his hand, and each of them took hold of both his hands, and all began to ask why he had left them, and all caressed him, expressing in different languages, actions, and attitudes, the same passion.

Creeshna having promised the Gopias that he would continue to them his kindness, they became elated with the happiness and elevation of the fourteen stages of the universe, and all rose up, and taking hold of his hands, began to dance. For the omnipotent Creator multiplied his form in proportion to the number of all the Gopias; and himself giving his hand to each of them, and taking the hand of each of them in his own hand, began to dance; so that each of them saw and believed that Creeshna was close to her side.—The Devatas, and Brahma, and Mahadeva, and all the rest, left their several stations, and, suspending their austerities, came thither as spectators, and presented all manner of flowers. In that agitation of the feet, and delicate motion of the limbs and waist, all the refinement of the Oriental dance was exhibited. The moisture of perspiration came on the cheeks [of the Gopias, their hair was dishevelled, and their jetty tresses trembled over their necks, resembling black snakes feeding on the dew of the hyacinth. Each of the Gopias, as she became tired with dancing, taking hold of Creeshna's hand, sat down or stood up with her hand round his neck, and her hand leaning on his shoulder, in the most graceful and affectionate manner. On the ground where they had danced, many flowers fell from the bosoms of the Gopias, and multitudes of bees, attracted by the fragrance, swarmed about them. The listener could not depart after once hearing the sound of the flute and the tinkling of the Gopias' feet; nor could the birds stir a wing; while the pupils of the Gopias' eyes all turned towards Creeshna. In short, after a thousand sports, they went to bathe, and renewed their caresses in the Jumna. The enjoyment of Creeshna with the Gopias, and of the Gopias with Creeshna, is a mystery, and cannot be described.*

* There is a print of this dance in Holwell. It is supposed to represent the circu-

One day, by Cansa's order, Breeksheb Assoor Ditya went to Bindreben in the form of an immense bull, his eyes inflamed with rage, his tail erected and bent over his head, his belly enormously distended, while his horns pierced the sky. Every moment fire flashed from his mouth, he tore up the earth as he walked along, and all animals fell down terrified at his bellowing. The inhabitants of the Ben, in this calamity, all called upon Creeshna, who, after comforting them, went towards the Ditya, and called to him at a distance, telling him that he knew him perfectly well under the disguise of a bull; that, if any disease tormented him, and made him thus frantic, he would cure him. Breeksheb, rejoicing to find so easily what he came for, ran towards him with intent at one plunge to toss him over the fourteen Dweepas: but Bhagavan seized both his horns with his two hands and threw him back eighteen steps; and thus for an hour together, as often as the bull made a push forwards, Creeshna threw him as much backwards; so that his strength being quite exhausted, and having lost his breath, he fell to the ground. Creeshna then, seizing him, violently twisted his neck round till the blood flowed from his mouth and nose, and his soul fled from his ponderous body. At this act the Devatas sung praises, and rained down flowers from heaven.

Cansa soon heard the sad news of the Ditya's death; and, at the same time, Nared came to Cansa, and said, "Know you not, O Cansa! that the slayer of so many Dityas and Rakshas, he who hath now killed your mighty champion Breeksheb Assoor, is the son of Vasudeva and Devaci, though reputed the son of Nanda and Yasodha; that the girl, whom you dashed against the stones, supposing it the daughter of Devaci, was, in fact, the daughter of Yasodha, exchanged for a son; and that Ram is the real son of Vasudeva, born of Roheenee, who was detained in Gokul for fear of you. I told you what would happen at the time of Devaci's delivery, but you have not the control of fate, nor can you change what heaven has

lar dance of the planets round the sun, warmed by his influence, and guided by his ray.

decreed." Cansa was greatly alarmed at this speech of Nared, and felt his strength diminish within him. However, he put Vasudeva again into prison, whom he had released, and, sending for Keishee, the chief of his Deos, with various arguments solicited him to go and kill Creeshna; and, after dismissing him, sent for Chandoor, and Mooshtek, and Seleb, and Selek, his guards and wrestlers, and said, "Ram and Creeshna, reputed sons of Nanda, but, in fact, sons of Vasudeva, will be invited hither on some pretence or other, and you must kill them in the way of your profession, for they are mere youths without strength, though to me, alas! as the angel of death. First, then, prepare a place for the assault, with a proper elevated seat for myself and my friends to behold it in safety; and let the inner gate be richly decorated and fortified, that my companions and viziers, and all the strongest of my guards, may keep ward there. And before that let there be another gate made, where Keel Assoor, the elephant-chief of all my elephants, must be stationed, that, when the lads come thither, he may dash them to pieces with his trunk and feet. Let there also be yet another gate made before these, where must be placed the strong bow, for the Dhanook Yug; and entrance must be denied to the lads there, unless they shall first bend that bow. The boys, desirous to see the exhibition, will naturally endeavour to draw the bow, but it is not an affair for such striplings as they are, and then will be the time for my iron-fisted champions to dispatch them." After this, Cansa selected from among all his friends Akroor, whom, with blandishing speeches, and even the humblest entreaties, he besought to assist him in accomplishing the death of Ram and Creeshna; telling him that, as Eendra, by the aid of Vishnu, subjected all the Devatas, so should he himself succeed by the help of Akroor. He urged him to use every artifice to induce Creeshna and Ram to come to Mathura; adding that, although it was his destiny to die, by the eighth son of Devaci, yet still every animal was led by the natural fondness for life to exert himself to avert the stroke. He told them that the only means of salvation for him left was to get Creeshna, and Ram, and Nanda,

and all the cow-herds, into his power; that he had provided various means for their destruction, first by the Dhanook Yug, then by Keel Assoor, the elephant, and, on failure of those means, by Chandoor, and Mooshtek in wrestling. Then the tyrant exultingly exclaimed, "Yes, I will kill Vasudeva and Devaci; and afterwards my own father Ogur Sein, who is their protector, shall feel my vengeance, and my heart will be at ease. After this I shall enjoy a long-extended reign, and I will pay all respectful attention to Rajah Jarasandha, my patron and tutor, and to my other firm and tried friends. Bring hither, therefore, without delay, O Akroor! those I have doomed to destruction, but let my intentions be a profound secret. Your public pretence must be the bow and the wrestling. To see the conflict I will invite all the neighbouring chiefs, and the day of Creeshna's death shall be devoted to the joys of the banquet." Akroor was very little persuaded by Cansa's speech: but after a long silence, having apologized for his freedom, observed, "That Eendra, whose weapon was the bejere, and Ravan, who had holden death in chains, yet could not finally parry his inevitable dart. All must die, and it is natural to animals to struggle both with hand and foot when expiring as you now do. Remember, from fate there is no escape; but I shall certainly obey your order." So Akroor went to his house, and Cansa retired to an apartment in his palace.

Previously to this, in conformity to Cansa's commands, Keishee, the Ditya, had arrived at Bindreben. He came in size like a mountain, with fiery eyes, starting as if they would burst from their sockets. Keishee and Creeshna soon met, and at the first onset, Creeshna threw him backwards a bow-string's length with such violence, that he fell senseless to the earth: but, soon coming to himself, he ran open-mouthed at Creeshna, as if with an intent to swallow him alive. Creeshna instantly thrust his hand into his mouth; and, though Keishee with all his strength laboured to close his teeth, he was unable; while Creeshna's hand, by divine power, grew so enormous in length and breadth within his mouth, that it closed up the whole orifice. Thus stifled, he fell to the ground, became violently convulsed,

his belly swelled up like an Indian gourd, and his soul fled from his body. The Devatas rained flowers from heaven, and all men shouted the praises of Creeshna.

Another day, Creeshna and his companions played at blindman's-buff. On that day Bhoom Asoor Ditya, coming thither, mixed himself in the play under the resemblance of a child, and no one had any suspicion of the fraud. When the boys had all hid themselves to avoid the blindman, Bhoom stole them away one after the other, and concealed them in a cave of the mountain, so that few were left at the sport: then Creeshna began to perceive that there was some secret agency in the operation, and recognised that old wolf. Assuming himself, therefore, the form of a wolf, he seized him by the throat and threw him on the ground; and, although he quitted the child's form and assumed his own, Creeshna did not release him, but he gave up his life there. Creeshna then brought the boys from the place where he had concealed them, and asked them who had led them thither? they answered, one of themselves. The Devatas again rejoiced on that day, and the cowherds, under Creeshna's protection, returned home in safety.—To return to Akroor: that herald, taking leave of Cansa, went to Bindreben to execute his commission; but, no sooner had he set out than he began to recount to himself the advantages he had acquired by the opportunity of enjoying Creeshna's presence, and, in a long soliloquy, expressed a full confidence in Creeshna's divine nature and attributes; imagining himself to have obtained some extraordinary merits in a former life to be thus fortunate; and that, when he should fall at Creeshna's feet, that liberator from the serpent of death would lay his hand upon his head. Thus, in various reflections on Creeshna's mercy and his own unworthiness, did Akroor pass the time as he journeyed; and the sun delayed setting to hear his pious ejaculations; but, when Akroor arrived at Bindreben, that planet went down. Creeshna was then at the house of a Gopia at the milking of the cows; and Akroor, arriving at Nanda's courtyard, saw the mark of his divine foot, and recognized the Padma, and Chakra, and Geda, and Kemel. The Devatas,

who had so often adored that spot, on beholding the fervour of Akroor's devotion and the purity of his faith, were stricken with shame. After the cows were milked, Creeshna came home with Ram, smiling like a lotos in bloom: yes, Creeshna, that beautiful personage, richly arrayed in garments of yellow and blue, with all the splendid insignia of a god, with long taper arms, and a string of flowers on his neck, at one moment calling one cow by its name, then another, and sometimes smiling on Akroor, glided easily along talking with the cow-boys. Akroor, on his approach, felt a paroxysm of agitation, and, at last, falling at his feet, with tears in his eyes, announced his name. Both Chreeshna and Ram, knowing that he was of the elder branch of the Yadava family, would not suffer his prostrations, but lifted him up, and gave him a most cordial reception, and led him into the house; there they washed his feet, and then set victuals before him. When he was well refreshed, Nanda and Oope-Nanda inquired of him the state of affairs at Mathura, how Cansa's government flourished, and tidings of Vasudeva and Devaci; uttering, at the same time, the most bitter invectives against Cansa for the murder of his own sister's six children, and calling him the greatest of criminals.

Thus did Creeshna kindly receive Akroor, and thus did he, who knows the hidden thoughts, fulfil Akroor's fondest expectations. Creeshna next inquired the cause of his coming thither; telling him the Gopias and cow-boys would all laugh at the impropriety of his paying such submissive adorations to a little boy. Akroor, standing up with reverence, informed him of Nared's coming to Cansa after Keishee's death, and acquainting him that Creeshna was son of Vasudeva and Devaci; from which moment Cansa redoubled his desire of destroying him, and had sent him (Akroor) to bring by any means Creeshna and Ram before him.

(To be continued.)

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NO. IX.—THE SIXTH INDIAN AVATAR, OR VISHNU INCARNATED IN THE FORM OF
PARASU-RAMA.



Parasu-Rama was the son of a most illustrious and holy Brahmin, of the name of Jamadagni, who, though allied to the blood royal of India, had adopted the garb and manners of an anchorite, and devoted his time to prayer and austerities in the solitude of a cell on Mount Heemachel, or Imaus, where he day and night fervently worshipped the Deity. His wife, whose name, according to the Ayeen Akbery, was Runeeka, had retired with him: and the reason of their thus secluding themselves from human society was, that Vishnu, propitiated by the mortifications they endured, might grant them the desire of their hearts, a boon without which a married Hindoo is ever miserable, offspring. One day, when a long series of intense penitentiary severities had unusually purified the mortal frame, and rendered it more proper for intercourse with Deity, Vishnu appeared to Runeeka in the

form of a handsome child, and asked her, what was the object of the unrelenting austerities practised by herself and her husband? She answered, that we may obtain of heaven a child beautiful and amiable as thou art. Your wishes are granted, said Vishnu; you shall have a son, who, to every bodily perfection, shall unite the noblest virtues of the soul. He shall be the avenger of innocence, and the exterminator of tyrants. Having said this, he disappeared; and in due time the prediction was fulfilled by the birth of Rama. In reward, too, of their exemplary piety, Eendra, the prince of the celestial regions, entrusted to their care the wonderful cow Kam-deva, which had the property of yielding from her dugs whatsoever the possessor desired. Notwithstanding this enviable attainment, they used their good fortune with moderation, and continued in their cell and in their usual practice of penitentiary duties. In the mean time young Rama increased in years and beauty, and showed such symptoms of dawning talents and virtues, that his fame reached Mahadeo himself, whose palace is on the summit of Mount Kilass, and the god himself undertook his education.

It happened that a prince of the Ditye tribe, or race of malignant genii, at that time very much oppressed the inhabitants of Hindostan. His name was Deeruj; he is represented as having a thousand arms, the expressive symbol of gigantic power and cruelty, and he particularly made war against the Rey-shees, or holy tribe, whose devotions he interrupted, and whose persons he in-

sulted. This sanguinary despot, on a hunting excursion, happening one day to pass near the cell of Jamadagni, had the curiosity to enter it, and instantly demanded for himself and numerous suite, those refreshments which their fatigue required. To his astonishment and that of his attendants, a table was instantly and sumptuously spread, exhibiting the most delicious meats and the richest wines, and that in such abundance, that the appetites of the whole cavalcade were completely satiated. After the entertainment, the hermit presented the monarch and his company with magnificent dresses, and jewels of inestimable beauty and value. The prince was so overwhelmed with surprise at this immense display of wealth in the cell of a secluded hermit, that, conceiving the whole to be the effect of magic, he at first refused to accept the presents, and sternly demanded by what means, from what quarter, he had obtained riches which far exceeded those of the greatest sovereigns, and in what subterraneous recess they were concealed. The holy man answered, that Eendra, the monarch of the upper regions, had, at Mahadco's desire, and in reward of his austerities, entrusted to his care Kam-deva, the cow of plenty, whose dugs were the inexhaustible mine whence his treasures proceeded. On receiving this information, the all-grasping tyrant was on fire to possess himself of the wonderful cow, and eagerly pressed the hermit to bestow upon him the mine as well as the treasure. The sage replied, that was impossible; for, it was the property of Eendra, and, without the consent of that deity, Kam-deva could not be removed, nor would any force on earth avail to tear her from the spot. This intelligenec filled him with rage, and his avarice became proportionably inflamed. He now determined to seize the sacred cow, and ordered his followers to surround the hut, and bear her away by force. But cows of celestial origin are not to be thus easily captured; for, on a signal from the hermit, Kam-deva magnified herself to three times her usual bulk, and rushing upon the rajah's troops with irresistible impetuosity, with her horns and hoofs she gored and trampled down the greatest part of them, put the rest to flight,

and then, before them all, flew up triumphantly to the heaven of Eendra, her master. The tyrant, enraged at the slaughter and discomfiture of his troops, immediately raised a great army, and marching to the spot whence he had been obliged so disgracefully to retire, and Kam-deva being no longer on earth to defend her keeper, the holy anchorite was cruelly massacred, and his hut razed to the ground. Runeeka, collecting together from the ruins whatever was combustible, piled it in a heap, on which she placed her husband's mangled body; then, ascending it herself, according to the laws of her country, set fire to it, and was with it consumed to ashes. In the meantime Kam-deva, in her journey to the paradise of Eendra, stopped at Kyllass, Seeva's metropolis, to inform Parasu-Rama, then about twelve years old, of the base and cruel conduct of Deeruj to his parents, to whose aid he immediately flew, but arrived only time enough to view the smoking embers of the funeral pile. The tears rushed down his lovely face, and he swore by the waters of the Ganges, that he would never rest till he had exterminated the whole race of Kettris, the rajah-tribe of India.

Armed with the invincible energy of an incarnate god, he immediately commenced his career of just vengeance, by seeking and putting to death, with his single arm, the Ditye tyrant, with all the forces that surrounded him. He then marched from province to province, and from city to city, everywhere exerting the unerring bow, Danook, and devoting the Kettris to that death which the enormity of their crimes merited. In vain they resisted, singly or united; alike unavailing were open force and secret fraud; they were discomfited in every quarter, and thus the avowed end of this, as well as all the other Avatars, was effectually answered, which are declared to be descents of the Deity, at certain stated intervals, for the express purpose of rooting out vice and impiety, especially if exalted on thrones, when more than usually predominant, from the face of the earth.

The conclusion of this Avatar states, that the divine Parasu, having fought and vanquished the Kettris in twenty pitched battles, and having utterly ex-

tirpated the race of the solar rajahs, collected together in one mass their accumulated treasures; he then performed the great sacrifice, and, after consecrating a due proportion to the Deity, distributed the remainder in charity. He then restored the empire of the three regions to the Devatas, or good spirits, that is, established a new dynasty of just and wise sovereigns of the Brahmin line, and retired to the Gaut mountains, concerning which this Avatar contains a remarkable fact, often insisted upon by those who contend for the eternal duration of the earth and the great revolutions effected by the successive changes of water into land, and land into water. The romantic story is as follows:

The Brahmins, wishing to assign a very ancient, if not an infinite, date to their empire, assert that the sea once washed the foot of the Gauts, from which it is now distant above one hundred miles, and have contrived this ingenious fable to sanction their assertions. After having transferred the empire to their particular tribe, Parasu-Rama requested of them a small portion of that empire, in which he might end his days in undisturbed tranquillity; which request, it seems, they thought proper to deny; a circumstance very inconsistent and improbable, but the fable required it; for, it was in consequence of this denial that Parasu retired to the Gauts. Being thus ungratefully treated by those whom he had exalted to wealth and dominion, he applied to Varuna, the god of the ocean, which then beat against the base of those mountains, and solicited that deity to withdraw his waves a little from the shore, and leave a vacant space, sufficient for an exiled prince to inhabit; he desired no greater extent of ground than an arrow would fly over. Varuna, ignorant of the real character that conversed with him, and compassionating his situation, granted a request which appeared so moderate; and it was settled, that the following morning, an arrow directed from the bow of Parasu, should determine the

limits of his future dominion. Unfortunately for Parasu, one of those penitentiary saints, whose eyes pervade the disguises of even the gods, by his power, knew and discovered to Varuna that the exiled prince was Vishnu himself, who, having by three strides defrauded Bali of the sovereignty of the universe, would undoubtedly, by the strenuous vigour of a divine arm, dart the arrow to an extent that would deprive him of all the land over which his waters rolled. Varuna now lamented the precipitate promise he had given, but declared it was irrevocable. It was finally resolved by artifice to counteract power, and the god of death was resorted to in this dreadful emergency. That deity kindly promised his assistance; and, instantly assuming the form of a white ant, an insect peculiar to India, under the cover of the night, crept into Vishnu's apartment, and, while the deity lay sunk in slumber, with his sharp teeth he so nearly gnawed asunder the string of the bow, that it became impossible for the arrow to be hurled to any great distance. The scheme succeeded; nor could the arm of Vishnu avail to send it beyond the limits of the tract which forms the present country of Malabar, and which, therefore, the Brahmins effect to say is the gift of Vishnu in this Avatar. The whole story, however, is so unconnected with it, and so contrary to its general tenor, that we may safely consider it as an artful interpolation, for the purpose of national aggrandizement. It is added, that Parasu, reflecting on the ingratitude of the Brahmins, uttered a dreadful curse against them on this spot, and that none of the Brahmin tribe are to be found to this day inhabiting a coast which they consider as proscribed to their order. The Hindoo legends affirm, that Parasu-Rama is still living on this coast; and the Ayeen Akbery informs us, they show his habitation on the mountain of Mehinder.*

* Ayeen Akbery, vol. iii. p. 239. Sonnerat, vol. i. p. 29.

THE LIFE OF CREESHNA.

PART I.—CONTAINING THE EXPLOITS OF CREESHNA DURING HIS INFANCY AND YOUTH, TILL THE DEATH OF CANSÀ, THE TYRANT KING OF MATHURA (*continued*).

Creeshna smiled upon Ram, and then told Nanda, that as Akroor was the head of the Yadava family, and was come by Cansà's order to invite him and Ram to Mathura, he was determined to go, and that Nanda and the rest of the Gopias should take their butter and cream and go also, for that it had long been his earnest wish to see Cansà. The news was soon spread through the Ben that Creeshna would go to Mathura, and it excited terror and astonishment in the mind of every Gopa and Gopia, and they all flocked to Nanda's house. The Gopias particularly exhibited all the symptoms of despair, and expressed themselves in the tenderest lamentations. That grief was so violent and that despair so extraordinary, that even Akroor forgot his mission to sympathize with them. The next morning, before the sun had put on his crown of rays, Creeshna and Ram mounted on a carriage with Akroor and set off; Nanda, Oope-Nanda, and the other Gopas and cow-herds, placed their butter and cream on carriages and attended them, Akroor promising the Gopias that Creeshna would soon return to them again. They lost not sight of the carriage for a moment till distance rendered it completely invisible; then they watched the cloud of dust it raised, till even that was no longer to be seen; and all returned weeping and lamenting to their houses. Creeshna soon arrived at the bank of the Jumna, when Akroor got down to bathe. The moment he plunged in, he beheld Creeshna under the water; but, lifting up his head, he found him still on the bank where he had left him. Again he plunged, and again he beheld the very same august person both in the water and on the bank. Astonishment seized him, and a kind of holy horror thrilled through his veins: he plunged several times more, but always the same objects presented themselves to his sight, till at last he knew not which was the real Creeshna, that without or that within the water. At length, looking more stedfastly at the latter, he beheld innumerable Devatas standing with their hands joined before that form

in the water in praise and adoration. He saw also Balhadur in the water in a sky-blue robe, with a thousand heads, and a thousand plumes waving sublime on every head. He saw also, standing by him, more distinctly, the form of Creeshna, of a black colour, wearing a yellow robe, beautiful to behold, with ruby lips, his neck smooth as white coral, his arms very long and slender, his breast high and bold, his waist of elegant proportion, his legs beautiful beyond expression, his foot like the lotos-flower, and his nails red. He had a jewel of inestimable value in his crown, a Chowder round his waist, a Zenna upon his shoulder, a string of flowers round his neck, a splendid Koondel in his ear, the Kowstek Men on his arm, and the Shankhe, Chacra, Geda, and Kemel, in his hands; while Nanda, Oope-Nanda, and the whole tribe of Reyshees and Devatas, stood by him with their hands joined, uttering his praises. Akroor, completely engrossed by that form, joined also in the profoundest adorations; and, while Creeshna looked towards Ram and smiled, thus addressed the incarnate God: "O Bhagavan! men, brutes, and all other created beings, are formed of the three dispositions, the Sat, Raj, and Tama Goon, and those three are reflections of thy light. Thy essence is inscrutable, but its shadow is in all bodies, just like the image of the sun in vases of water: if the vases be broken, where is the image? and yet that image neither is increased nor diminished by the fracture of the vessels. In this manner thou art all in all. Thou art thyself numerous Avatars. Thy Hayagriva-Avatar killed Medhoo, the Ditya. On the back of the tortoise, in thy Courma-Avatar, did the Devatas place the solid orb of the earth; while, from the water of the sea, by the churning-staff of Mount Meru, they obtained the immortal Amreeta of their desires. Hirinakassap, who had carried the earth down to Patal, did thy Varaha-Avatar slay, and bring up the earth on the boar's tusk; and Prahlād, whom Hirinakassap tormented for his zeal towards thee, did thy Nara-

Sing Avatar place in tranquillity. In thy Dwarf, or Bamun, Avatar, thou didst place Bali in the government of the mighty monarchy of Patal. Thou, too, art that Parasu-Ram, who cut down the entire Jungle, the residence of the Reyshees. And thou art Ram, the potent slayer of Ravan. O supreme Bhagavan! thou art the Budha-Avatar, who shalt tranquillize and give ease to Devatas, human creatures, and Dityas. The Avatar of Kalci, when the infidels shall daily increase, is also thy Omnipotent Power, to thee I bow with reverence. To thy Almighty power the understanding of finite man cannot reach; well may it escape the sight of myself and other men, who are a prey to worldly desires, when the mightiest Devatas, Brahma and Seeva, are lost in astonishment. He who is freed from the bonds of prejudice and absorbed in thy light, is like a deer who knows not its own musk-bag, and yet is attracted every way by the scent of the musk: so he who is enamoured of thee knows thee not, and yet is intoxicated by the scent. O Natha! I, who know nothing, fly to thee for protection: do thou, who didst attract Nared and Ambereeke, show mercy upon me also, and give me to see and know Thee."

After Akroor had thus expressed his praises, all that he had seen in the water became invisible, and he returned in admiration and astonishment out of the river. Creeshna asked him why he had so often looked towards him and then plunged again under the water, and why he seemed so amazed? "O Natha! sovereign Lord," he replied, "thou well knowest what I have seen in the water. Thy power fascinates all the world, and exhibits fictitious appearances every where, which mislead and blind the understanding. Ask me not the wonders I have beholden, but pity me, and take me, miserable as I am, under thine Almighty protection." Creeshna smiled, and ordered the carriages to advance. Evening came on as they arrived near Mathura, and Akroor stopped the carriage in a retired place. Creeshna there told Akroor to go forward, and promised to follow him next morning; nor would he accept Akroor's pressing invitation to go to the residence of the latter, but he, and Ram, and Nanda, and the Gopas, all

stayed on the spot, the whole night. Early in the morning Creeshna looked towards the city, and there beheld it as a castle built of pure crystal, the lofty doors formed of unwrought gold, jewels of the purest water engraved upon those doors, and the windows made of rubies and diamonds. Round the fortification was a deep ditch, and the suburbs were all filled with rows of warehouses, and innumerable parrots were perched on the domes and in the galleries, while thousands of majestic peacocks displayed their proud plumage at the doors, and enamoured doves were seen joyfully cooing with their delighted mates. The bazaars and squares were free from dust and dirt, and the reflection from the walls, from the polish of the white stone, shone brilliantly upon the walls opposite. All the people at Mathura, who had before heard the wonders of Creeshna, stood waiting to see him with flowers and other presents; and, when Creeshna moved forwards into the city, they had set up trees of Kepeeleh before all the doors. The women left their work unfinished to run and gaze upon him, while Creeshna went on smiling and looking with ineffable sweetness. By the way he met the washerman* of Cansa with a quantity of his master's fine clothes, and he thought fit to ask him for some; but the washerman gave him a very rude answer, and told, clothes made for a monarch would ill become a country clown like himself. Creeshna lifted up his hand, and with one blow struck the washerman's head off; and then taking what clothes he liked, and giving orders to Ram and all the Gopias scattered the remainder about the street. At that time a tailor happened to be passing by, who, coming of his own accord to Creeshna, fitted on the clothes exactly to his body, and, for his good offices, was rewarded with eternal liberation. A little beyond was the house of Soodaman, the king's gardener, and Creeshna stopping at his door, the gardener came and offered him his choicest flowers and

* After the pompous description above, this may appear like descending to the bathos, but I cannot prevail on myself to erase it. washing was a princely employ in those days.

wreaths, which he had made for Cansa, in a most devout and submissive speech.

Creeshaa then went forward, and, in their progress, they met a woman named Koobeja. Creeshna told the cow-herds to call to him that crooked deformed creature; but she good-naturedly refused to come, and asked him what that straight comely person could want with such a crooked wretch as she was; however, they brought her by main strength. Creeshna said to Ram, "Behold the beauty of this divine creature, and yet greater beauty is still in her destiny." She had sandal and flowers in her hand, which Creeshna solicited, and demanded her name and occupation. She replied, "That, as the Creator had thought proper to bestow on her form three lumps, she was called Treebengee; that her cast was Serendheree, her employment to carry sandal and flowers to Cansa, and that it was time she should be at the palace." Though she said this, her heart was inwardly converted to Creeshna's faith, and she offered him her sandal and flowers. Creeshna took hold of her neck with one hand, placed two fingers of the other under her chin, and setting his foot upon her's, gently drew her towards him, and she became perfectly straight and handsome. Creeshna was then going on, but Koobeja caught hold of his robe, and said, "O Bhagavan! all animals are born with the three lumps of Sat, Raj, and Tama Goon*, from which nothing but thy favour can release them; now that thou hast made me straight and handsome from crooked and deformed, honour my house with thy presence, and exalt me above both worlds." Creeshna promised to come to her house after he had seen Cansa, and then went on inquiring the way to Jegge Dhanook, or the place where the bow was to be bent; and, on his arrival there, he approached the Dhanook, and stooped to take up the bow. The keepers who were sitting there forbid him to touch it on peril of his life; they warned him the strongest men could with great difficulty bend or even lift it; and, if he attempted to draw it and should fail, instant destruction was his doom.

Creeshna lifted up the bow with the facility with which a straw might be elevated, and snapped it assunder at the first effort. The heavens and the earth shook at the noise that bow made in breaking, and the ears of the men in Patal and Swerga tingled at the sound. Cansa, too, was extremely alarmed at the news of the bow having been broken. When Creeshna went forward, after breaking the bow, many mighty men and able warriors ran after him, crying, 'Stop him! strike him down!' but no one interfered, and all men conceived he must be a Devata and not a man. With these events the day drew towards its close, and Creeshna with his companions rested there that evening, regaling on rice and milk. Cansa, in the mean time, having learnt what this despised youth had done, began seriously to feel his own inferiority; and, when he went to sleep, he dreamt that he saw himself without a head, and the moon divided into two parts; that several deep wounds were in his body, that he was accompanied by none but dead persons, that he was mounted on an ass, rubbed with oil, with his feet bound, and his body publicly exposed in a naked state. He started up, and found he had only had an ill-omened dream, but he could sleep no more! In the morning, with an oppressed heart, he came from his chamber, and ordered preparations for the assault to commence, and the athletics sounded to the combat with drums and hautboys. Chandoor and Mooshtek, with their pupils, began; Saleb, and Selek, and Seltak, sparred. The neighbouring rajahs who had been invited took their seats, and Cansa also ascended his throne.

Creeshna, early in the morning, prepared himself for the festival, and said to Ram, "I will wrestle with Chandoor, and Mooshtek shall feel your strength." But, when they came to the gate, they found a fierce elephant placed there to oppose them. Creeshna, fastening up all his hair together to the crest on his head, and, binding the vest that covered his shoulders fast round his waist, told the elephant-driver to make room or he must perish; but the driver urged on the beast with fury to attack him; and this was Cansa's best elephant. No elephant like him was to be found, he was

* From this circumstance it seems clear that Koobeja is an allegorical personage.

therefore reserved for some desperate extremity; and the driver goaded him forward with all his might, that black mountain, roaring like thunder, sprang forward with the celerity of the wind, and caught Bhagavan in his trunk. But Creeshna soon disengaged himself, and was sometimes under his feet and sometimes between his teeth. Now he would run away and the elephant after him, then he would seize him by the tail and drive him a long way before him, nor could the elephant, by all his exertions and dashing round his proboscis, ever strike him. At length the beast grew fatigued, and his breath failed; Creeshna then, without much effort, threw him to the ground, and, tearing out his enormous tusks, armed himself with one and Ram with the other. The men of Mathura were equally pleased and amazed at the success of this unequal combat; and augured thence that Cansa himself would soon meet the death he had destined for this brave youth. The elephant's blood was largely sprinkled on Creeshna's clothes, and the two brothers paraded majestically along with the elephant's teeth on their shoulders, while the sweat shone on their faces like dew-drops on a lotos. When they had passed the gate, Chandoor and Mooshtek beheld them at a distance; and, though they appeared of such diminutive size, yet it was evident to those champions that there would be no small difficulty in conquering them. Cansa, too, saw them at a distance, and a horrible dread came upon him, and he trembled exceedingly, and would gladly have left the place; but what refuge is there from the stern decree of destiny? besides, the shame of disgracing himself before all the assembly retained him in his seat. The rajahs of the countries round, who were sitting near his throne, were all struck with joy at seeing Creeshna; they could not be satisfied with looking at him, and concluded for a certainty that he was an Avatar of Bhagavan from the miracles they had heard ascribed to him. Chandoor then came near to Creeshna, and said, "That, as a servant's duty was to obey his master, although his life was at stake, that, by order of Cansa, he was to oppose him, if he chose to risk a combat." Creeshna admitted the

fact of Chandoor's duty to his master, and that, though a youth, as he had frequently sparred with his own companions the cow-herds, he was now ready to spar with him. Chandoor told him to exert his utmost prowess, for that he would find it very difficult to escape from his hands.

Chandoor then began to wrestle with Creeshna, and, in the same manner, Mooshtek and Ram, hand to hand, head to head, breast to breast, chin to chin, arm to arm, and foot to foot. Creeshna, though his body appeared softer than a lotos, gave it the resistance of adamant; and Chandoor and Mooshtek, who had so often conquered the strongest athletics, were now forced to feel that these two youths were more than a match for them, nor could they divine by what arts they might be overcome. Chandoor, in despair, finding that his strength did not avail, attempted to make use of artifice; but Creeshna disappointed all his efforts, fair and unfair, and it is certain that Chandoor and Mooshtek must in a former life have been sincere devotees, for this very contact and communication with Bhagavan is a blessing that Brahma and Roodra are on fire to obtain. Creeshna and Ram determined within themselves that they would slay Cansa that same day. In the mean time, Vasudeva and Devaci, still lingering in prison, were incessant in their supplications to the Supreme Being to protect and prosper their child. And now Creeshna took Chandoor's hand under his own arm and broke the hand-bones, so that his antagonist ran distractedly about in the most violent pain. Soon, however, collecting together all his force, he doubled his fist and struck it at Creeshna's breast, but it made no impression. Creeshna then took hold of his two hands, and, swinging him round his head, dashed him to the ground in such a manner, that, at the same instant, the bird of his soul flew from the cage of his body and perched on the bough of liberation. Thus did Creeshna slay Chandoor as a child crushes an ant. Ram dispatched Mooshtek in the same manner; who, when he fell to the ground, trembled exceedingly, while the blood gushed from his nose and mouth. After this bloody victory Creeshna began to dance with Ram and the cow-herds, and miti-

gated their apprehensions. All men, except Cansa, rejoiced at the death of these champions, and their exclamations of joy came most unpleasantly to Cansa's ear; who, frowning revenge upon them for this their satisfaction, ordered his companions to omit no means whatever to kill the son of Nanda, and Nanda himself, as well as Vasudeva and Devaci, and Ogur Sein also, for protecting them. While Cansa was in the very act of speaking, Creeshna rushed upon him. The tyrant's presence of mind and resolution instantly failed him; he looked wildly and in amaze at Creeshna; and, though he had a drawn sword in his hand, and a bow and arrows before him, he remained in a state of stupefaction, without attempting to use them. Creeshna, with one spurn of his foot, dashed the refulgent crown of Mathura from his head, and then dragged him down from the Musnud by his hair, in spite of all his struggles and vigorous resistance both with hands and feet. Creeshna drew him in this manner a long way by the hair of head; and, while prostrate and terrified he was thus dragging along, his soul became liberated of the three

worlds; for, during his whole life, whether sleeping or waking, in motion or at rest, he never for a moment could refrain from thinking of his destroyer; and, at the moment of his death, he had the beatific vision of his celestial antagonist, with the Geda, and Kemel, and Chakra, and Shankhe. Cansa had twenty brothers, who, in fraternal affection, ran after Creeshna to revenge his death; but Ram, observing them in pursuit, took up the Kel and Moosel, which are his proper weapons, and slew them all at one blow. Cansa's wife and the wives of his brothers now began to make the most bitter and heart-piercing lamentations. Creeshna pitied them, and advised them not to repine at the unavoidable decess of fate. Creeshna then went on to the place where Vasudeva and Devaci were confined, and fell at his father's and mother's feet, in spite of all their endeavours to raise him, and said, "O father! be happy in the life of that son for whose sake his earthly parents have suffered such infinite distress and danger." At that moment Vasudeva and Devaci knew him for the Creator, and burst out into prayers and praises.

PART II.—CONTAINING THE EXPLOITS OF CREESHNA, AFTER THE DESTRUCTION OF CANSa, TO THE DEATH OF JARASANDHA.

When Creeshna found that the eyes of Vasudeva and Devaci were opened to his real character, as Perebralme, or Universal Lord, while there still remained so much to be performed by him on that earth, which, as an Avatar, he had condescended to visit, he again plunged them into forgetfulness. In consequence, they once more thought him their son, and beheld him and Ram standing before them in a posture of the utmost respect. Creeshna now began to bewail aloud the many evils to which they had been exposed on his account: he lamented that they had not even enjoyed the common gratification of parents in the company of their own children, the care of their education having fallen to the lot of Nanda and Yasodha. "Formerly," says he, "when men were infinitely more long-lived, their whole existence on earth was passed in the service of their parents; and now life is so short, your maternal comforts, O Devaci! have been, to my

shame and regret, abridged of that little, but I hope to obtain forgiveness from parental commiseration." Thus did Ram and Creeshna comfort Vasudeva and Devaci, who most heartily rejoiced in the sight of their children, insomuch that even the milk started from the breast of Devaci, throbbing with transport. After this, the crown of the city and kingdom of Mathura was placed on the head of Ogur Sein, to whom, by right, it belonged; when Creeshna thus addressed him: "O rajah! do not refuse the government from the hands of a youthful destroyer of an usurper. May your reign be long and fortunate, and all rebellion and faction be for ever crushed! Be assured, that those of the tribe of the Yadavas, who have left Mathura through the oppression of Cansa, will all speedily return. Govern them with wisdom, and do not increase the tribute beyond that of former times, nor delight, like Cansa, in aggrrieving thy subjects." From

that very day, Ogur Sein took upon himself the government of Mathura, and, by Creeshna's aid, his reign prospered exceedingly. Wherever Creeshna resides, prosperity must necessarily ensue; that it was, while he abode in Gokul and Bindreben as the son of Nanda and Yasodha, and when he had cleansed Mathura from the filth of injustice and oppression, his parents Vasudeva and Devaci became most happy and exalted in their new-found progeny. One day Creeshna sent for Nanda and Oope-Nanda, and all the Gopas, or shepherds, and cow-herds, and, in a posture of reverence, presented Nanda with his and Ram's thanks for all the favours bestowed on them by him and Yasodha; more, in fact, than could have been expected from natural parents, and then told him that it was necessary that *he* (Nanda) should go to Bindreben to console Yasodha and the Gopias, or shepherdesses. He then gave Nanda mighty presents in money and goods, and dismissed him with the other Gopas, who all returned to Bindreben in tears. Soon after, Vasudeva and Devaci, in council with the heads of the family and wisest of their Zennardars, reflecting that they had not hitherto been able to give Ram and Creeshna an education suitable to Kettris, and, according to the rites of the rajah tribe, desired that the Zennar might be duly conferred on them, and the ceremonies of the nuptial festival were now performed in a fortunate hour; they were bathed in the holiest waters, and were taught the Procheete and Gayatree, and invested with the Zennar. On that day, innumerable cows and vast quantities of gold were given away. Vasudeva then sought for a complete tutor for his son; and, having heard of a famous Zennardar in Avengtee, he determined to send Ram and Creeshna thither. They went accordingly to Avengtee, and entered into the discipline of the tutor, and, by their extreme attention, so rivetted the esteem of Sendeepen, that he presently taught them the whole science of the Vedas. Although, to save appearances, they staid some time in Avengtee as his pupils, yet, in fact, Creeshna learnt all the sciences in one day and night, and perfectly knew all the sixty-four Kela, to the great joy and equal astonishment of Sendeepen, who

had been used to see his pupils employ months and years upon only one book. Creeshna, after acknowledging his obligations to Sendeepen, desired him to demand what he wished for most, as his tutor's fee. Sendeepen begged leave to consult his wife before he determined on his request. The wife entreated, that, if it were possible to raise her two sons to life, that might be the boon bestowed. Sendeepen accordingly requested of Creeshna to restore his two dead sons. Creeshna said it should be done; and then, with Ram, went to the sea-shore, when the Sea, assuming a human shape, came before him, and most submissively asked his pleasure. Creeshna demanded the two sons of Sendeepen. The deep replied, he had them not; but, if Creeshna commanded, he would demand them of PANCHAJANYA, the great Shankhe, or shell-fish, who was in his belly. Creeshna immediately leaped into the sea himself, and, seizing the Shankhe, tore it open. When he found them not there, he brought the Shankhe up with him for the purpose of using it as a trumpet, and going thence to the abode of Dherme Rajah, the god of justice, or Pluto, he there sounded the Shankhe. Dherme Rajah immediately appeared, and, making most profound submissions, entreated to know his commands. Creeshna demanded, as before, the two sons of his tutor Sendeepen; and by this command of Perebrahme, these two young men became alive again, and Dherme Rajah presented them to Creeshna, who, with Ram, immediately took them to Sendeepen, and, presenting them to him, said, "O Gooroo! demand of us something yet more, for our wish is to serve thee." But Sendeepen answered, "O Ram and Creeshna! I am delighted with you to the soul; nor have I more to ask, but receive at least my blessing: and may the sciences you have learned of me remain for ever fresh in your memories!" Creeshna and Ram then taking leave of their tutor set off from Avengtee, and soon came to Mathura, and the people there received them like lost wealth restored.

Creeshna having, as we have seen, thus rapidly learnt the whole circle of sciences from Sendeepen, and being returned to Mathura, on a certain day

called to him his kinsman Oodhoo, and, taking him aside, requested of him to go to Bindreben, and bear his salutations to Yasodha and all the Gopas, and particularly to the Gopias, whom, most of all, his absence grievously afflicted; announce to them his intended return the instant his affairs permitted, and, in the mean time, until they could obtain his personal presence, to exhort them to be constantly employed in Yug, which is his spiritual presence. Oodhoo, having accordingly received Creeshna's instructions, set out for Bindreben on the following morning, and arrived the same evening. He found all the Gopas and Gopias sitting in a melancholy attitude, and meditating on Creeshna; the Zennardars at prayer, and the secular persons engaged in charity and other pious works, to obtain his presence. Nanda carried Oodhoo to his own house, and there refreshing him after his journey, anxiously asked him the news of Creeshna, of Mathura, of Vasudeva, and Devaci, and whether Creeshna meant to keep his former promise of coming to see them. In short, he became extremely garrulous, running over all Creeshna's miracles while a little boy, and declaring, that, from what Garga had told him, he knew Creeshna to be Bhagavan, Perebrahme, Pooran-Pooroosh, who was born for the protection of Devatas and Zennardars, and the relief of the oppressed; as was clear from the destruction of Cansa, who had the strength of a thousand drunken elephants; and of Keishee Assoor, who was also strong as a thousand elephants; and from his breaking the bow, which was beyond the power of man. Yasodha then took her turn to speak, and said, she thought it very hard, that when Creeshna was little, he permitted Nanda and Yasodha to be called his parents; but now Devaci was become Nanda, and Creeshna was called Vasudeva: still, however, from having had the care of Creeshna's infancy, she thought her prerogatives greater than those of Devaci. Oodhoo silenced them, by saying, that whoever is constantly night and day thinking of Creeshna becomes exalted above all the three worlds; and that it is pronounced in the Vedas and the Smreete, that whosoever, at the time of expiring, shall retain Creeshna in his remembrance,

he will infallibly become Peremookte, or thrice-blessed; that Nanda and Yasodha were at the pinnacle of their desires, and that he knew even them to be Avatars of Devatas. Nanda again earnestly demanded if Creeshna would keep his promise in returning to Bindreben? And Oodhoo replied, that Perebrahme was at all times present every where, just as fire, though concealed, is always present in wood: that it was not for a moment admissible, that, because he now called Vasudeva and Devaci his parents, he should forget Nanda and Yasodha; for that the Preserver of the world has no parents, nor can be called the particular *parent* of any one, but is Creator of the universe. In the state of his present existence he is to be considered as an Avatar, like that of Matsya, Courma, Varaha, Nara-Sing, and others, which are all emanations of that tremendous power who is at once the Creator, Preserver, and Destroyer, of all things. "We short-sighted men," exclaims Oodhoo, "resemble a child, who, having turned round till he is giddy, thinks the heavens and earth also turn round with him, and does not consider that the rotatory motion is all in his own brain. Thus, O Nanda! are we bewildered in prejudices, thus are we grown giddy with pride, and know not the Creator. Now, therefore, O Yasodha! think no more of Creeshna as your son, but as a being who is father, child, husband, wife, brother, and whatever you can think of that is dear among human beings, all centring in one object, and without that object there is nothing!" Thus did Oodhoo pass the whole night in discourse with Nanda and Yasodha; and, at sun-rise, next morning went to bathe in the Jumna, dressed in a shining robe set with lovely jewels. As he drove along in his splendid carriage, in all houses which he passed, he heard the inhabitants at their different employments singing the miracles of Creeshna. He beheld all the Gopias in profound affliction for his absence; and, as most of them were ignorant of Oodhoo's arrival, they said to each other, "Ah! there is Akroor's carriage! he is returned; but, if Cansa had lived, he would have been devoted to instant destruction." Another supposed Creeshna had sent some other

herald to inquire after them. A third observed that Creeshna had now other affairs to mind than to send after *them*: while a fourth insisted that Creeshna did most certainly recollect them. Innumerable discourses of this kind met the ears of Oodhoo, all the result of affection and grief; and he was astonished at the universality of the theme.

By the time Oodhoo returned from the water, the Gopias had learned that some one on the part of the Yadavas was arrived, but it was not Creeshna, and they all hurried to Nanda's house to learn news from Matlura. A sense of modesty, added to intense grief, on account of Creeshna's absence, kept them for some time silent, but at length they broke silence, and overwhelmed Oodhoo with the multiplicity of their inquiries. Oodhoo, after many pangs on their fidelity, delivered Creeshna's message to them, desiring them not to mourn his absence, for, that there was no absence where there was mental union, as was the case between him and them. "Therefore, O Gopias! be true yourself to Yuga, or devotion; for that is the point at which no such thing as absence takes place." The Gopias, on hearing this, said to Oodhoo, "What manner of conduct is this, or what justice does Creeshna use, to give Yuga (mental union) to us, and *Bhook* (corporeal union) to the women of Mathura? Alas! there is no mention made of us in Creeshna's assemblies? Does he ever recollect that night in which we forsook our husbands and children to share his beloved embrace? Will he ever mitigate the torments of separation which we now suffer? As for ourselves, we do not for a single moment forget those nights wherein we obtained our hearts desire. And surely, O Oodhoo! you will not fail to tell Creeshna of our inexpressible misery." Oodhoo stayed some months in Bindreben, to console and comfort the Gopias, and satisfied them greatly by again and again repeating the words of Creeshna, inasmuch, that, to the people of Bindreben, his stay appeared but for a moment. Transported with passion, they showed Oodhoo the places in the wood and by the water-side where they had tasted happiness with Creeshna. Oodhoo was infinitely pleased with their constancy, and assured them, in his turn, that Creeshna never had so

much love and attachment to Lakshma, whose pure body is all one fragrance, and the bedam (almond) beneath whose foot for ever blows, as for them: that Lakshma had never known, even in a dream, that entire satisfaction which they had enjoyed with him *awake*: that, for himself, he only wished God would make him one of the happy Gopias; and that, as Creeshna was to him a deity, so he esteemed them also to be Devatas; for, that they were never separated from that sublime *Pooran-Pooroosh*. And now Oodhoo, with difficulty, obtaining leave to return to Mathura, Nanda, Yasodha, and all the Gopas and Gopias, sent separately their congratulations to Creeshna by Oodhoo, who, as soon as he arrived at that city, delivered an account of his mission; of the exact state in which he had left Nanda, Yasodha, and the Gopias, and presented the congratulations of each separately by name. Creeshna was not insensible to these tokens of their regard; for on hearing the report, his eyes were moistened with tears of sympathy, and he resolved to seize the first opportunity of revisiting the scene where his childhood and youth had been so delightfully passed.

Creeshna recollecting that he had promised Koobeja a visit, in pursuance of that promise he one day went to her house, accompanied by Oodhoo. Koobeja was overjoyed, and, with her own hands, presented him the clothes, jewels, necklaces, betel, and sweetmeats, which she had prepared for the occasion. Oodhoo was greatly amazed at her beauty; but she, with a conscious shame, beheld Oodhoo as an intruder, for Creeshna was the idol of her heart. Creeshna, observing the ardency of her passion, took hold of her hand, and, gently drawing her towards him, placed her by his side, and she was made happy as a Yogee is by the completion of his Yuga. What the devotee and the penitent often seek in vain (union with Deity) Koobeja easily obtained, and she persuaded Creeshna to stay some days at her house. Some time after, he went, according to promise, to Akroor's house with Ram, where his reception was equally warm and respectful. Akroor made him a most devout and submissive speech, and prophesied that he should slay the army of eighteen Kshoonees (or

Kshouheenees) now he had assumed the full splendour of his Avatar for lightening the burthen of the earth. Creeshna answered him with great tenderness and respect, as head of the Yadava family, and requested as a favour of him that he would go to Hastanapoor to bring certain intelligence of the state of affairs at that capital, where he had heard that, after Rajah Pandoo's death, Doorjoodhen oppressed his five cousins; Judishter, that ocean of modesty and tenderness; Bheema, strong as the mountain Sumeru; Arjoon, the famous bowman; Naenl, renowned for his beauty; and Sahadeva, the wise and penetrative; in short, that he looked with an eye of extreme jealousy and ill-will on all the Pandoos.

Akroor, exceedingly happy at this commission, chose a fortunate moment for his journey, and went to Hastanapoor. There he first respectfully visited Bheekhem, and Dhreetrashtra, and Doorjoodhen, and his brothers. He then went to the abode of the Pandoos, where he paid the profoundest reverence to Koontee, and severally embraced Judishter and his brothers, and made a proper obeisance to Dropeda, their sister, endeavouring by every means in his power to comfort the Pandoos. For the purpose of learning a true state of affairs, Akroor stayed some months at Hastanapoor; but, such was the general fear of Doorjoodhen, that no one ventured to tell him the truth. At last, Koontee had a private interview with him, and at that interview informed him of the secret of Dhreetrashtra's weakness and Doorjoodhen's jealousy of the Pandoos, who were every where well spoken of, but against whom his fury had risen to such a height, that he had some time before presumed to put a venomous snake into their victuals and poison into their water. Koontee pleaded to him her near affinity with Creeshna, as sister to Vasudeva, and sent a message to Creeshna, complaining that Doorjoodhen, like some fatal eclipse of the sun and moon, obstructed the rising glory of her sons, and imploring his assistance, since she herself and all her family placed their reliance solely on Bhagavan. Akroor comforted her as well as he could, and took an early opportunity of remonstrating with Dhreetrashtra on the glaring in-

justice of his own and Doorjoodhen's proceedings. Dhreetrashtra answered, that he felt the force of Akroor's arguments, but that his heart was blackened by the intense affection which he bore his children, and could not assume the colour of his good advice, which, like lightning, had, for a single moment, flashed upon the obscurity of his mind; that he knew, however, Bhagavan had been born for the purpose of relieving the burthens of the earth, and for the protection of his friends, and paid him all due reverence. Akroor, after having given his advice to Dhreetrashtra, and hearing his answer, took leave of him, and Koontee, and the Pandoos, and returned to Mathura.

Akroor, on his arrival from Hastanapoor, communicated all he had heard to Creeshna, and immediately that all-wise Being resolved within his mind what should be done. Now the two wives of Cansa, Asep and Peranet, daughters of Rajah Jarasandha, monarch of the kingdom of Maghada, had continued in a state of the most profound grief ever since the death of their husband, and went weeping and wailing to their father. Jarasandha was exceedingly grieved at the intelligence, and, being moved with extreme pity for his daughters, swore on oath and performed sacrifice that, if he did not slay every one of the Yadavas in revenge for the death of his son-in-law, the guilt of the murder of Cansa should lie upon him. Accordingly he levied an army of three Kshouheenees,* and set out for Mathura. Creeshna on hearing it, said to Ram, that, as he was come for the purpose of lightening the burthens of the earth and punishing the wicked, he would slay Jarasandha, but not at that time, having other affairs to transact of more immediate importance. In the mean time, there transcended from heaven two

* This is the word which often occurs written in Mr. Halhed's manuscript; but in Ferishta, it is written Coheen, and is there said to be a military body, "consisting of twenty-one thousand eight hundred and seventy elephants of war, an equal number of chariots, six thousand six hundred and ten horsemen and one hundred and nine thousand three hundred and fifty foot!!!" *Credat Judæus.*

carriages, the shining of whose jewellery was like the splendour of the stars, and in each carriage was a collection of various kinds of arms. Creeshna looked towards Ram, and asked his advice, as they two were the only protectors of the Yadavas, and as it was necessary to lighten the overburthened earth of Jarasandha's army. Creeshna then ascended one of the carriages, and made Dareke his driver, while Ram mounted the other carriage. Taking with him a few chosen troops, Creeshna sounded the dreadful shell Panchajanya, whose roar re-echoed from earth to heaven, and both went to meet Jarasandha, whose army was affrighted and confounded with the sound of that wonderful instrument. But Jarasandha himself, advancing before his army to the sound of trumpets and clarions, exclaimed, "O Creeshna! it is improper for me to meet you in battle, since I know you to be invincible by any hostile weapon of mine. How, therefore, can I possibly, on any equal ground, engage with you, since the very attempt to combat with an Avatar must infallibly draw down upon me a severe and just punishment. I will fight Balhadur. Now, therefore, O Balhadur! take care; for, with a single arrow, I shall dispatch your mighty spirit to Deva Loke." Creeshna desired Jarasandha not to praise himself, as he and Ram knew not each other's strength; and wherefore did he glory, since his relation Cansa had just obtained the merited fruits of his baseness? Jarasandha now became violently enraged, and overwhelmed Creeshna and Ram with a shower of arrows, like the sun in a cloud. The women of Mathura stood on their balconies anxious spectators of the battle: when Creeshna was obscured by arrows, they were oppressed with grief, but rejoiced exceedingly when by the flash they beheld the standard on which was the figure of Garoor. Jarasandha exhausted all his strength, and that of his army to no purpose; he could by no means obtain the victory. Creeshna then strung the all-conquering bow, and, drawing it, shot one arrow. With the stroke of that one arrow all the chariots, with the chiefs they bore, and the elephant-drivers, and their horses, with their riders, and the infantry, were all discomfited and slain. The blood

streamed from the heads of elephants like rivers of red water from the mountains in the rainy season; the carriages were dashed about like ruined houses: the light of the standards was like the wood of a burning jungle; and there was a sea of blood flowing around, in which the heads of young warriors floated, while the jewels on their plumes resembled the shining of the sands, and the noble victims expiring, exclaimed aloud, Jeye! Jeye! Those that escaped, fled in the utmost trepidation; but Ram pursued them, and with his Moosel, (mace) pounded to atoms all the bones of his adversaries. When Jarasandha alone remained alive, Ram seized him as a lion seizes a kid, and was going to strangle him: but Creeshna took hold of Ram's hand and prevented him, saying, that he himself would slay Jarasandha hereafter, when other more weighty affairs were finished. So they left Jarasandha at liberty, and returned to Mathura, where great rejoicings were made, and the Devatas reigned flowers from the sky. Thus did Creeshna return triumphant into Mathura; and Jarasandha, defeated and ashamed, went alone to his own kingdom, resolving, as he journeyed, that he would immediately commence most severe austerities, and by that means acquire the power of taking Creeshna and completing his revenge. As he went along, some of the neighbouring rajahs, his allies, comforted him; reminding him that conquest and defeat were accidents; that it was the business of recluses to pray and mortify, and that of a monarch to fight. Stimulated by these and similar expressions, Jarasandha went into his own country, again levied a mighty army, and, in pursuit of the determined revenge he had vowed, came seventeen times more to Mathura with so powerful a force, that no human efforts seemed able to oppose it: but he was each time defeated by the Giver of Victory, and fled each time with precipitation. On the eighteenth attack he brought, to assist him in his reduction, Kallee-Jeven: at which time Nared came to the latter, and acquainted him with Creeshna's delightful colour and fine dress, and all the marks and celestial appurtenances of the divine Bhagavan. This last time, when Kallee-Jeven came to Jarasandha's assistance, he took an

army of three Crores of his own with him, and with that force came to Mathura and invested the city. Creeshna, on this, said to Ram, "O brother! since the Yadavas suffer extreme hardships on my account, this time I will kill Kalee-Jeven, and afterwards Jarasandha: but, as the men of Mathura are so dispirited and alarmed, I am resolved to relieve their apprehensions, and to place them in a state of security while you and I are employed in battle." On that same day he commanded Vesookerma to found a city in the midst of the sea; and in obedience to his commands, a city was instantly built all resplendent with jewels. In it were to be seen bazaars with beautiful shops richly decorated, and gardens adorned with the trees Pareejatek, the houses shining with crystal, the stables for horses composed of iron and silver, golden vases over the door of every house, and innumerable temples, whence clouds of incense perpetually ascended. In one moment every thing was ready, and now Bhagavan took all the living creatures of Mathura and carried them thither as a Yogee enwrap in his Yug. Having thus placed them in security, he advanced, together with Ram, to give battle to the invader.

While Creeshna pressed forward to meet the enemy's army, Kalee-Jeven recollected the description given him by Nared, viz. Narayen, with the Kemeel, and Chaera, and Geda, and Shankhe, in his hand, and rejoiced when he saw these signs that he should take this conqueror, shining like the sun. Kalee-Jeven ignorantly presumed to hope that he should take Bhagavan, whom even the Yogee by Yug, and the devotee by devotion, and the penitent by mortifications, cannot reach. Shree-Bhagavan now advanced; but, having formed his resolve in respect to the rajah, fled from him. Kalee-Jeven pursued him with celerity, telling him all the time it was unworthy of one, who called himself a Kettri, to flee; and that certainly he would bring shame on Vasudeva, and lose all the renown he had already acquired. At length Bhagavan came to a wood where the Reyshee Metsye Gundhe was sleeping, on whom he threw his robe, and retired into the thicket. Kalee-Jeven, in close pursuit, soon arrived at the same place; and

thinking he had now caught his prey, drew in a hurry the yellow robe of Bhagavan from Metsye Gundhe's head, and spurned the sleeper with his foot: at which the Reyshee awoke, and the fire of his eye falling upon Kalee-Jeven, who stood before him, instantly reduced him to ashes. The Metsye Gundhe was the son of Rajah Mandhata, who conquered wheresoever he turned his arms; for which reason Devatas and men besought his assistance in their wars with their enemies. As Metsye Gundhe was extremely fatigued by the toils of war, and had not slept for a number of nights, Eendra and the other Devatas thanked him for the satisfaction he had procured them, and desired him, at length, to retire, and enjoy the refreshment of a long repose. They told him they had the power of conferring on him Dherme, Arthe, or Kam, but that, without the favour of Bhagavan, they could not give him Mookt, or beatitude; that, however, Shree-Bhagavan would one day bestow it on him. They entreated him, for the present, to repair by sleep the fatigues of war, and denounced, that, whoever should disturb and awaken him, should instantly by his look be reduced to ashes. Under these circumstances, Kalee-Jeven awoke the sage, and suffered the fate denounced. Creeshna then came forward in all the splendour of the Divinity, and was respectfully asked by Metsye Gundhe who he might be, and how, with his tender and beautiful feet, he arrived at that thorny place. Then, suddenly, as if in reply to his own question, he exclaimed, "Thou art the sun! the moon! Bhagavan! Gopal!" adding, that he knew him from the splendour of his countenance, which had exchanged his darkness for light, that he acknowledged him for the superior of the three Devatas; and, after again asking by what earthly appellative he was known, told him that himself was Metsye Gundhe, son of Rajah Mandhata. Creeshna replied, that his names were like his bodies and his actions, *innumerable*: that even those who could count the grains of the universe could not number them. But that *now*, when he was come to lighten the burthens of the earth, to comfort the good and punish the wicked, he was called Vasudeva, after his earthly progenitor; that he had slain a number of Rakshas,

and, lastly, Cansa: that there were reasons why he had brought Kalee-Jeven to that fate: and, as the Devatas had told him he should obtain Mookt from Bhagavan, and as in a former life he had been a sincere devotee to him, (Creeshna,) he bid him ask what he desired. Metsye Gundhe, recollecting that Garga had cast his nativity, and told him that he should one day enjoy a sight of Bhagavan, was elated with joy, and said, "O supreme Lord! how can MAN, who is the prey of Maya, (delusion,) praise THEE properly? Blinded by the passions, he spends the precious moments of existence in their service; and, like a frog secluded in a well, who knows nothing of the external state of things, is lost in oblivion. But now, by the advantage of beholding thee, my understanding is enlightened, and I know thee to be Bhavagan!" Creeshna replied, "O Metsye Gundhe! I know what is your desire, and it is granted, although the giver of the throne of the Chekrewertee cannot obtain it. He who gives up his mind to me and seeks no other support, I am his *possession* and *treasure*." Metsye Gundhe, after praises and thanksgiving to the Almighty, being aware that the influence of the Cali Yug was apparent, wherein men would become very short-lived and be immersed in depravity, thought it better to withdraw his mind altogether from the world. Taking leave, therefore, of Creeshna, he set out towards the north, and, going to the mountain Gundhemaden, gave up his mind to the recollection of the Almighty Creator, beheld the splendour of God, and became so absorbed as to lose all self-consciousness.

Creeshna, after this, came down by the way of the mountains, defeated the entire army of Kalee-Jeven, and sent all the booty and prizes to Dwaraka. Jarasandha set out in search of Creeshna, and when he saw him, Creeshna and Ram went before him as if in flight. There is a mountain called *Neredroog Naghen*, into the defiles of which they retired. Jarasandha rejoiced at this, assuring himself that no road was now left for their escape; collecting, therefore, a great number of faggots, and blocking up all the avenues of retreat, he set fire to them all at the four sides, and concluding that both Ram and

Creeshna were certainly burnt, returned triumphant to his own dominions. This mountain was eleven Yagans high above the earth, but Creeshna and Ram leapt over it in safety, and came to Dwaraka.

Rajah Bhekhem was monarch of Redme, and had five sons, Rokem, Akrej, Rokemrethe, Rokemmahoo, and Rokemmalee, and one daughter, named Rokemenee, who, having heard much of the miracles and praises of Bhagavan, became almost frantic with love for him, and was dying for a sight of him. She made a vow, with heart and soul, never to accept of any other being for a husband than Bhagavan; he, too, having been variously informed of her beauty, was equally in love with her. Rajah Bhekhem and four of his sons were content to unite Rokemenee with Creeshna, but the eldest, Rokem, was utterly averse; he thought Creeshna beneath them, and preferred Rajah Seesopal both for his dignity and qualities; so, in compliance with the recommendation of his eldest son, Rajah Bhekhem commenced the nuptials of his daughter with Seesopal, son of Rajah Demhookhe, monarch of Chendeperce, but always in despite of Rokemenee, who abhorred the union. When the time of marriage approached, she dispatched a Zennardar to Dwaraka with an account of her melancholy situation. The messenger soon arrived, and, going to the palace of Bhagavan, was ushered in, when Creeshna immediately descended from his embroidered throne and performed Dendevet, and received him with all possible marks of respect, to the surprise of the Yadavas, who did not think him worthy of so much honour, and spoke slightly of this behaviour: but Creeshna rebuked them, and very highly advanced the character of Brahmins as heirs of Brahma. "O Swamee!" said he to the Brahmin, "in whatever kingdom you reside there is peace and prosperity. O Bramah-Mooret! this day is fortune indeed propitious, since an elevated character like yourself is come to my city. Speak openly and truly for what purpose are you come, that I may fulfil it." The Brahmin, greatly pleased with his reception, said he was from Gundenpoor, and delivered Rokemenee's message, informing him how fervently that

princess was attached to him, and that she had vowed with heart and soul to put herself under no protection but his, and that it was incumbent on him not to let the jackal seize on the food of the lion; that, for his sake, she had worshipped both Devas and Devatas, and now, perhaps, the son of Demhookhe would obtain her, for the day of marriage approached; and, to celebrate the nuptials, Seesoopal had brought with him, to Gundenpoor, Jarasandha, and Sal, and Denteblicktra: "Come, therefore, she added, "and slay these enemies, and release me from the anguish of suspense; contrive to get me out of my father's house, or remain concealed near Gundenpoor, (*but how can the sun be concealed?*) and, when the women of my tribe bear me forth out of the city to worship the Deva who presides over marriage, you may then easily bear me away. It is for you that I have long worshipped that Deva already; without your assistance I shall perish, and my blood will lie at your door; but nobles like yourself never soil their hands with the blood of youth and innocence." Creeshna, on reading this Patec, and hearing the message of the good Zen-nardar, determined to satisfy Rokemenee's inclinations.

Creeshna took the Brahmin by the hand, and ordering Dareke, his driver, to prepare his carriage immediately, desired the Brahmin to be seated therein. The horses were so fiery and unruly that Creeshna was obliged to seat *him* first and afterwards himself; he then again took hold of the Brahmin's hand, that he might not be alarmed by the rapidity of the motion; for, distant as it was from Dwaraka to Gundenpoor, they performed the journey in one night. In the mean time, Rajah Bhekhem had made magnificent preparations for Seesoopal's approach. Learned Brahmins read the Vedas, the bridal women sung hymns, and intelligent sages consulted the Yejoor Veda for a lucky moment to perform the ceremonies and bind on the bracelets, while magnificent offerings of gold, silver, cows, rice, &c., were made in Rokemenee's name. Demhookhe, also, on his part, had made equally splendid arrangements, and set out with his nobles for Gundenpoor, besides elephants, and fine horses, and carriages, and

numberless attendants, on foot. They were met by Rajah Bhekhem, who with much ceremony conducted them into the city, and the whole cavalcade were provided with lodgings suitable to their rank. Among these, Jarasandha, Seesoopal, Sal, and others, enemies to Creeshna, were in hopes that the Yadvavas would attend this marriage; that so they might seize Creeshna and Ram. Creeshna set out first alone, and Ram followed with a puissant army: but as they did not arrive when the day of marriage came, and Rokemenee's Brahmin was not then returned, she went to her balcony, and, with great anxiety, stretched her longing eyes towards Dwaraka, bewailing her lot, ardently addressing Bhagavan, who knows the heart, and weeping exceedingly. At this time her left arm began to start, at which she rejoiced much, taking it for a happy omen; and, after a little time, looking again towards Dwaraka, she beheld an army approach, and recognised the standard for that which she had heard belonged to Creeshna, and soon after espied her Brahmin returning. At this moment her exultation exceeded all description, and she gave him a most gracious reception for having so well performed her commission. Soon after, Rajah Bhekhem heard the news of Creeshna's coming from Dwaraka to Gundenpoor, and then recollected how desirous himself had been for an union between him and Rokemenee, if Rokem had not opposed it. In consequence, he went out to meet Creeshna with all possible civility and respect, and attended him into the city with every offer and office of hospitality.

(To be continued.)

TO OUR READERS.

We have been obliged to double the numbers to bring in all the matter relative to the Indian Avatars, before the conclusion of the volume, at the time previously specified.

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THE WORLD'S PANTHEON; OR, THE PICTURE GALLERY OF SUPERSTITION.

No. X.—THE SEVENTH INCARNATION OF VISHNU IN THE PERSON OF RAMACHAN-
DRA, THE GREAT LEGISLATOR AND REFORMER.



That a very considerable portion of the ancient history of India is couched under that of the three Ramas, if all three are not, in fact, what seems to be extremely probable, only different representations of one sovereign chief, eminent in arts and brave in arms; and that the achievements of the first Cuthite colonies, in conquering and civilizing the southern regions of India, over-run, as the Lower Egypt in preceding pages is depicted to have been, with monsters and demons, are shadowed out in this particular Avatar, by Ravan and his army of associated giants; are intimations already submitted to the judgment of the reader. Whether this hypothesis, of their personal identity be true or not, it is certain that, in the belief of the Brahmins, the same transmigrating spirit is supposed to have successively passed into and animated the bodies of the two first of those warriors; for, in their system, intended directly to inculcate, on their

disciples, the fanciful doctrine of the Metempsychosis, the souls of Jamadagni and Renecu, the parents of Parasu, are represented to have passed into the bodies of Dassaratha and Causelya, the parents of Ramchandra. Dassaratha, however, was not only the nominal father of this mighty Avatar, he was also, by another wife, the immediate progenitor of the great Bharat, the acknowledged sovereign of all Hindostan, in periods not wholly emerged from fable; and from whom we have observed the whole country is generally, in Sanscreeet records, denominated Bharata. Bharat was the father of Judishter, whose exploits, with those of his brothers, are the subject of the Mahabharat, whence the first ray of genuine Indian history emanates, amidst the tenfold obscurity of its intricate mythology. But this subject will be discussed more at large hereafter: our present business is with the hero of the seventh Avatar; who, as just observed, was the son of Dassaratha, monarch of Owdh, in Bahar, and of Causelya, a princess of royal descent; a name which, it has already been observed, is a derivative of Cushala, and therefore marks her for the mother of this renowned Cuthite. The father's exploits seem to fall little short of the son's in lustre; for his name signifies one whose car had borne him to ten regions, or to the eight points of the world, the zenith, and the nadir; and, according to the Brahmanda Pooraun, that father was descended from Surya, or Heli, which is equally a name of the Sun, in Greck and in Sanscreeet; a circumstance which proves that they could go no farther back in his

genealogy, since these genealogies always end in planetary progenitors.

Thus renowned, according to the Puranas, was the father of our hero, Ramchandra, who was born in the Trata-Yug, and had the great Hindoo priest and prophet Vasishtha, in his earliest youth, appointed for his guru, or tutor. Under that venerable sage, he soon became profoundly versed in all arts and sciences; but still more eminent for his rigid austerities and incessant devotion, leaving the palace of his father for the deserts, and spurning the ease and delights of a court, for long and wearisome pilgrimages to the most holy and distant pagodas of Hindostan. In consequence, the events of no preceding Avatar engage a larger portion of the walls of those pagodas, than those of the present. The priests were impressed with the remembrance of his peculiar protection of their order, and his feats are blazoned by them with more than common pomp. The cause of the appearance of the Deity; in every fresh Avatar, should ever be borne in mind by the reader, which is the humiliation of pride and the subversion of gigantic vice in Dityas; or, in other words, tyrants in iniquity resembling demons, who have been originally elevated to thrones by means of dissembled piety and bodily austerities, always intense, and often in the highest degree sanguinary. This constantly recurring circumstance, added to their certain downfall, after they had relaxed in their spiritual vigour, and had grown insolent, arbitrary, and cruel, were, doubtless, intended as so many direct proofs of a presiding Providence, to whom the loftiest potentates are equally accountable for their actions as the humblest of their vassals; and that our future good or adverse fortune, in a great measure, depends upon our just or improper use of the gifts of that Providence. The tyrant of the seventh Avatar was Ravan, who, according to the Ayeen Akbery, "having ten heads and as many hands, spent ten thousand (lunar) years, on the mountain of Kylas, in worshipping God; and devoted ten of his heads, one after the other, in hopes of obtaining, for his final reward, the monarchy of the three regions." He obtained his desire; but, intoxicated, as was usual with this order of Dityas,

when their ambition was gratified with the influx of power, so greatly abused it, as to render his removal necessary to the welfare, no less of Devatās than of human beings; and, on this occasion, Ramchandra was appointed the agent of the divine vengeance.

Over this great empire, destiny appointed Ramchandra the future potent sovereign; and, for the proper government of the kingdom, he was trained in youth by a long series of voluntary severities, in which he first learned to govern himself, and subjugate his own passions to the control of reason. Having punctually performed all the ordinances of the Vedas, and gone through the whole circle of the sciences with Vasishtha, his renowned guru, at the usual early age he was espoused to the famous Sita, the daughter of a neighbouring rajah, whom he obtained in a trial of skill with other young princes, his rivals, by his superior dexterity in the use of the bow. Ram, however, wasted not his youth in the enervating pleasures of love. Being at once a great prophet and a powerful prince, he set off from his father's capital, with his beloved and beautiful wife, accompanied by his brother Lachsman, and crossing the Ganges, commenced his travels through Hindostan; travels, like those of Osiris, intended at once to reform and subdue. The steepest mountains and the most dreary deserts are passed with equal facility? and every where, in his progress, he relieves the oppressed, liberates the captive, routs the Dityas, and succours the Devatas. Sometimes we find him in his hermit's cell, engaged in intense devotion, surrounded with disciples, on whom he inculcates the Metempsychosis, that peculiar doctrine which his Avatar seems to have been invented on purpose to impress with energy on the mind of the Indians; at other times, we find him advancing, in terror, at the head of an army, created by his command, and obedient to his nod. The air swarms with Devatas, ever ready to assist him; and the most miraculous prodigies are incessantly performed throughout the varied drama. It is Rama civilizing and conquering the world; collecting into cities the savages of the mountains, and restraining, by laws and discipline, the predatory banditti, of the desert.

The conflict, between Rama and Ravan, forms the leading feature in the character of this Avatar, which displays to us, on the one hand, valour, when firmly connected with virtue, as invincible by any human power; and, on the other, conjugal affection, equally impregnable to the allurements to temptation and the menaces of despotism, as rising in brighter splendour and purity from the refining fire of adversity. It appears, from the Brahmin books, which describe this Avatar, that Rama and Ravan had been rivals in the trial of skill by which the former obtained his wife. The success of the former, who was then but a youth, stung the jealous Ravan to the soul, and he burned for an opportunity to revenge the insult. An outrage offered by Lachsman, the brother of Ram, to the sister of Ravan, inflamed in a high degree his thirst of vengeance. But the tyrant too well knew, and too much dreaded, the vigorous arm of the incarnate god, to think of attacking him by open violence: he meditated, by fraud, the accomplishment of that vengeance; and determined to wound him in the tenderest part, by robbing him of Sita, his beloved wife. To effect his purpose, by the transmigrating power which his former penitentiary life had obtained him, he assumed the body of a beautiful stag, and remained continually browsing about the hut, erected near the Ganges, in which Rama, with his wife, performed the austerities of Indian anchorites. His sportive gambols, and the beauty of his shining skin, particularly attracted the notice of Sita, and she requested Ram to shoot the animal, and present her with its skin for an ornamental vest. Rama, by his omniscience, being no stranger to the turbulent spirit that animated the stag, at first opposed her desire, and warned her of the probable danger that would attend the act; but Sita persisting in her request, he consented, on condition that both herself and his brother Lachsman should, during his absence on that exploit, confine themselves within the limits of three circles, which he immediately drew, with chalk, around the hut. To those conditions she readily assented; and Ram, taking with him the unerring bow, after a chase of many cose, shot the devoted animal to the

heart. The liberated spirit of Ravan immediately entered the body of a mendicant Yogee, stationed near the hut of Ram, who, with loud and doleful lamentations, bewailed the lot of Ram, about to perish under the superior might of his assailing enemy! Alarmed and terrified at the sound, Sita immediately besought Lachsman to fly to the relief of his brother; but he, suspecting treachery, and confiding in the power inherent in an incarnate deity, who had already triumphed over numerous and powerful armies sent against him by the allies and relatives of Ravan, refused to pass the prescribed limits of their temporary prison. A repetition, however, of the dreadful tidings, added to the renewed entreaties, and still more eloquent tears, of his sister, at length prevailed on Lachsman to quit the hut, and seek his brother. It was now that the artful mendicant, with a tale of well-feigned woe, approached the deluded princess, and, for the love of Vishnu, besought that relief which no Yogee implores of the pious in Hindostan in vain. Although, regardful of her husband's injunction, Sita at first declined complying with his wants; yet, afterwards, as he grew more importunate, she thought the pious occasion might justify her passing over at least the first prohibited circle, in order to relieve his hunger with such homely fare as an anchorite's cell afforded. She did so; but, on her extending her arm, to present him with the vegetable boon, the royal impostor caught hold of her hand, and, gently drawing her over the two other lines, dissolved the charm that formed her security, and bore her triumphantly away, through the regions of the air, to his palace at Lanka. Fearing, however, to incense his queen, if he brought her within the walls, he erected for her a pavilion, under one of the largest trees of the garden of the palace, where she was watched, day and night, by a guard of gigantic females, and had daily the mortification of receiving the visits of her ravisher, though neither threats nor persuasion could bend her intractable mind to consent to the gratification of the criminal passion with which he burned.

In the mean time, Lachsman had not advanced far in his search after Rama,

before he met him returning, loaded with the skin of the slain deer, intended as a present for his beloved Sita. Their agony, to find her gone from the hut, was inexpressible, and infinitely increased by their ignorance whither she was fled. They set out, therefore, to ransack earth and Hades for the fugitive beauty; and, in their travels through a subterraneous cavern, are informed by a penitent Yogee, at his devotions, that he had recently beheld a Ditya flying through the air with a female, in a southern direction, which Rama immediately knew must be his enemy Ravan, and the object of his inquiry. In the same direction they immediately shape their course; and, as they traverse the mountains of the peninsula, meet with Hanuman, king of the apes, (that is, a race of savages inhabiting the Gauts, whose forests abound in that animal) of whom they make further inquiries, and by him are shown a ring, which fell from the ear of some unfortunate female hurried through the air by a malicious demon. Rama instantly recognised the ring for Sita's; and now, knowing they must have gone to Ceylon, engages Hanuman, with a vast army of his subject apes, to assist him in the recovery of his wife. Of this army, Hanuman was appointed generalissimo, and many of his courtiers subordinate commanders. They march on till they come to Medura, on the sea-shore, and here a natural phenomenon, which presents itself to the view of the astonished spectator, gave birth to the romantic story of their raising, at the point of Ramancoil, a bridge of rocks from the continent to that island. But, during the delay which this stupendous undertaking occasioned, Ram, being exceedingly anxious to know how Sita was treated by Ravan, and whether she retained her connubial fidelity inviolable, prevailed upon Hanuman to use the power, conferred on him by Vishnu, of transporting himself through the air to the palace of Ravan, and resolving his anxious doubts on this interesting subject. Hanuman accordingly commences his aerial expedition; but, arriving in the region above Ceylon, finds his progress opposed by ten gigantic demons, whom Ravan had appointed guardians of the entrance into the island from that quarter. The prominent feature of this Avatar, the

Metempsychosis, here again forces itself upon the recollection of the reader; for, to avoid their fury, Hanuman migrates into the body of a fly, and, descending on the shore in that form, enters the island; but he had now a land-enemy to encounter, in the person of an enormous Ditya, placed sentinel on the coast. The fly might easily be crushed, but the ape, endowed with that peculiar portion of immortal vigour supposed in the Hindoo romances to be attached to Hanuman, (for, in their mythology, he is the son of one of their chief deities,) might be a match for the terrific Ditya. Resuming, therefore, his natural form, he engaged the demon with such courage and energy, that, not less astonished at his bravery, than apprehensive of his own defeat, his gigantic adversary demanded a parley, and inquired his errand on that island. Hanuman replied, that he was come thither for no other purpose than to explore Sita, the wife of Ram, his sovereign and master. The Ditya, without hesitation, informed him that he would find her in the garden of the palace of Ravan, his potent lord, under a sysem-tree: upon which they parted in tolerable good humour. Pursuing his journey, under various disguises, Hanuman at length reached the palace, and taking his station, in the form of a cat, on the battlements, he there observed the captive princess under the described tree. He immediately descended from the eminence on which he sat, and hastened towards the pavilion, which he reached unobserved, at the instant Ravan himself entered, and thus became an ear-witness of the ardent protestations which he poured forth to the disdainful princess. Every flattering tribute that could gratify ambition or avarice, his power, his kingdom, his revenues, were offered in profusion, in case she would consent to share his nuptial bed. Unwrought upon by all his artful representations, she sternly answered, that she was Ram's alone: that to Ram, her heart, while it continued to beat, would remain inviolably faithful; and, in consonance with the received notions in Hindostan, of the mighty power attached to wedded purity, she added, that, if he persisted to torment her with his loathed addresses, she would consume him with fire. On the tyrant's

departure, Hanuman, mounting in the air, dropped into the lap of Sita the ring he had received from Ram, which she eagerly seized, and instantly knew to be her own. After a moment's reflection, she burst into a flood of tears, conjecturing that it could only have fallen from Ram, who, combating with some of the malignant genii of the air, had been defeated and slain. The faithful Hanuman immediately became visible, and throwing himself at her feet, transported her with the tidings of her husband being in perfect health and security, and of his having despatched himself for the express purpose of searching out her place of confinement, and of consoling her in her exile from all she held dear. Accustomed to the insidious designs of her ravisher, Sita, for a time, doubted the truth of all he asserted; but Hanuman again and again protesting his sincerity, and that he received that ring from Ram himself, to be conveyed to her as a pledge of his unaltered affection, provided she preserved her connubial vow unviolated, her sorrowing tears were converted into those of heartfelt rapture; and she charged him to hasten to her lord with renewed protestations of her duty and eternal regard, as well as with her ardent entreaties that he would exert his utmost to rescue her from the daily insults and outrages of her tyrant. She then took one of the bracelets from her arm, and gave it to Hanuman for Ram, in proof of his having been successful in discovering her, and as a pledge of her unaltered affection. Hanuman promised faithfully to fulfil her commands, and respectfully took leave of the princess; but was so exasperated against Ravan, that as he passed through the beautiful gardens, he tore up the stately trees, scattered about the delicious fruits, and turned the giant's paradise into a desolate wilderness. The gardeners, observing the dreadful havoc made by this mischievous ape, went with loud complaints to Ravan, who, enraged at the treatment, sent armies of giants to attack him, all of whom Hanuman successively defeated, being enabled, by the imparted energy of Ram, to rend up the largest trees by the roots, which he made use of as his weapons of offence; tearing to pieces the arrows, converted into serpents, that were darted against him, and annihila-

ting the combined efforts of sorcerers and magicians. The page of history would be degraded by entering into a minute detail of such puerilities; we, therefore, return with him to the continent, where the innumerable battalions of apes, or mountaineers, have already constructed a bridge of rocks one hundred leagues in length, and where Ram impatiently awaited the arrival of his herald. The tidings brought by Hanuman at once consoled and animated the son of Dassaratha? and he rapidly passed the miraculous bridge, at the head of no less formidable a body than 360,000 apes, commanded by eighteen kings, each having under him 20,000.

Ram, having passed this mighty bridge, marched on with all expedition to the capital of his determined enemy, the whole island of Ceylon being struck with terror at the immensity of the invading army, the brightness of their armour, and the loud clangour of their warlike instruments, all but the hardened tyrant himself, who, from the turrets of his palace, surveyed with composure the vast cavalcade advancing to his destruction. Ram, though yet at a great distance, espying the tyrant in that elevated situation, took aim at him with his never-failing arrow, and at once shot off all the ten crowns from his ten heads. His wife, who had frequently remonstrated with him on the subject of Sita, being at this juncture with him, seized the opportunity to renew her representations, and urged him to remember, that he who was able thus dexterously, with one arrow, to shoot off the the ten crowns from his ten heads, could also with equal facility, in the same manner, separate the ten heads from his mangled trunk. Ravan turned a deaf ear to all her entreaties, and was rather confirmed than shaken in the obstinate resolution he had taken, not to restore Sita to her injured husband. That husband now advanced in all the avenging fury of an irritated prince and of an insulted god. Amidst the denunciations of vengeance, like a true deity, Ram exalted the voice of mercy; and one of the chief generals in Hanuman's army was despatched to inform Ravan, that if he would, even at this late period, consent to deliver up his captive, the horrors of desolation, by fire and the sword, might be prevented, and the lives

of thousands of his peaceful subjects be saved. The ambassador, however, was received at Ravan's court with accumulated insult, and the dreadful preparations for battle began on both sides. Previous to its commencement, the brother of Ravan and some of his most experienced warriors, conjecturing what must be the infallible event, and lamenting the fatal obstinacy of their sovereign, came over to the camp of Ram, and, making their submission, after proper proofs of their sincerity, were received into favour and honoured with his confidence. Indeed the legend makes these renegados to be of great importance to their new sovereign, by developing the projects of Ravan, and counteracting his malignant designs. A select body of 10,000 veteran Dityas, on whom Ravan placed a firm reliance, began the assault; but, by the might of Ram and Lachsman, were quickly routed and slain. Other bodies of giants successively followed, of great number and not less courageous, but were defeated by the desperate valour of Hanuman and his apes. Above one hundred thousand of Ravan's army soon lay dead on the field.

Ravan's eldest son, by name Inderset, owing to intense austerities, was in high favour with Brahma, who had imparted to him energies more than human, when engaging an enemy. The demi-god now led on to the combat the remainder of Ravan's exhausted forces, and, by the most animating addresses, incited them to rush on the foe, avenge their slaughtered comrades, retrieve the sullied honour of their king, and, by one desperate and united attack, retrieve the fortune of the day. While these men were fighting with a valour bordering on desperation, Inderset himself mounted into the air, and darted upon the apes arrows, which, the instant they reached the earth, were converted into serpents. These, enfolding the bodies of the astonished apes, and confining their arms and legs, left them, thus cutangled, an easy prey to the swords and battle-axes of the gigantic soldiers of Ravan. And now victory seemed on the point of deserting even the divine Ram; who, utterly confounded at the disaster, applied to Vishnu for his aid against the abused power of Brahma. The reader has been informed, in a preceding page,

that the food of Garoori, the eagle on which Vishnu rides through the vault of heaven, consisted of serpents; and that favoured bird was immediately despatched by his master to the assistance of Ram. Pouncing down upon his devoted prey, the majestic bird of the skies stalked over the field of battle, and soon cleared it of the new species of foe that had taken possession of it; and now, the apes, disentangled from their serpentine chains, renewed the contest with redoubled fury, while Lachsman, inspired with a portion of Ram's divinity, ascended the etherial regions on the back of Hanuman, and waged a long and dubious conflict with Inderset, in a portion of the sky immediately above the palace of Ravan. In the end, the former of those mighty champions, proved completely victorious, and the head of Inderset, cloven from his body by the sword of his antagonist, fell down to earth on the very spot whence the obdurate king had anxiously beheld the bloody conflict. As the gory scalp rolled at the feet of the obdurate father, the distracted Mandora, in a paroxysm of rage, upbraided the unfeeling tyrant with all his unheard-of crimes, unbounded lust, unprecedented barbarity, and shameless injustice, denouncing to him his own instant destruction, unless he immediately sued for peace and released from the power of enchantment the incarcerated Sita. In vain she stormed; in vain she entreated; the adamant of his heart was not to be softened, and he now resolved to try the last, the only resource which his obstinacy and madness had left him. Of his slaughtered family, there yet remained to him a brother, elder than that which had fled to Ram. He is represented as a Ditya of enormous strength, but so devoted to sloth, that he was buried in sleep the greatest part of the year, only waking occasionally to swallow down an immense quantity of provisions for the support of existence: under which character is, doubtless, meant to be portrayed some neighbouring prince of Ceylon, an indolent and luxurious glutton. But from any sleep, save that of death itself, the thundering exclamations of his brother giant could not fail to awake him; for, suddenly entering his palace, he bellowed out his complaints against an innumerable army of

merciless apes, headed by one Ram, that were on all sides ravaging his dominions. He informed him, that already two of his sons, seven of his generals, and nearly 200,000 of his best soldiers, had perished in the conflict, and that he himself, (Ravan) with the remainder of his family, must inevitably meet the same fate, if not immediately succoured by his powerful arm; an arm that was accustomed singly to crush embattled myriads. This Indian Morpheus, (or rather Silenus; for he is said, in the Indian legend, to have been transported about, when awake, by a certain car drawn by four asses, another remarkable circumstance of similitude with the Greek fables,) this drowsy giant, I say, thus aroused from his deep repose, in return roared out, that his brother had engaged himself in a most unjust war; that no assistance which he might bring could protect him from the certain vengeance of that Ram, who was no less than Vishnu in human shape; and that, in a recent dream, he had beheld the utter destruction of himself and his army. Ravan, appalled at the horrid denunciation, was at first so confounded he knew not what to answer; but, soon resuming his natural confidence, and conceiving that his formidable brother was a match for even Vishnu himself, in a firm tone replied, that if his destiny were fixed, it would be in vain for him to fly from it: that, it did not become a great monarch, like himself, tamely to resign his kingdom to an usurper; and he once more conjured him at least to attempt his emancipation from the horde of barbarians that inundated his dominions. The Ditya replied, that, though the effort was hopeless, he would still make that effort, and that his life was at the command of his sovereign and brother. And now, this terrific combatant, moving onwards, like a mountain, towards the field of battle, struck with dismay the bravest of the enemy; all but the intrepid Ram and Hanuman; who immediately despatched some thousands of the stoutest apes, accustomed to climb mountains and steep declivities, to tear down the rocky eminences that surrounded them, and hurl them upon him as he passed. These, however, made no impression on the Ditya, who warded them off with his shield, and pierced the

ponderous masses through with his arrows. Arrived in the field, a most dreadful slaughter of the apes, from that moment, commenced; and, had not Ram descended from his chariot to succour them, the whole race must have been exterminated. With all his might, drawing the immortal bow, he aimed an arrow that instantly shot off his unwieldy head, which made the earth tremble as it fell, while his agitated trunk continued to make sad havoc among the affrighted apes. As fast, however, as they fell, the victims who thus perished were, by the power of Ram, restored to life; and the convulsive motion shortly after ceasing, they were thus effectually delivered from their most dreaded enemy.

The accomplishment of his brother's awful prediction now appeared to Ravan to be rapidly approaching. Despair gloomed upon his face, and remorse wrung his heart: yet not that despair which unnerves for enterprise the palsied hand, nor that remorse which produces repentance and reformation. No; in this last and dire extremity, his soul seemed to acquire new ardour and energy; he rushed on to the field, at the head of his few remaining troops, with such irresistible fury, that Ram himself was constrained to admire his undaunted fortitude; but, it becoming necessary to check his desolating progress, and let him feel the entire superiority of his enemy, he levelled his bow, and shot off nine of his heads, calling out to him to desist from provoking farther the power that could in an instant overwhelm him, and promising, if he would, even now, lay down his arms, and give up Sita, he would heal his wounds and restore to him his forfeited empire. The tyrant, though covered with blood, and frantic with pain, declared, that if the hour of his destiny was arrived, he must submit to its stern decree, but that he would rather part with his tenth head, also, than relinquish Sita. At this answer, Ram, greatly incensed, shot off his remaining head, and thus exterminated the determined foe that had caused him such accumulated labour and affliction. The perturbed spirit, however, of this dreadful monster, seemed for some time reluctant to abandon the headless trunk; and the numerous hands,

each grasping some deathful weapon, still continued furiously to brandish them, and mow down whole battalions of inferior warriors. An exertion of magical power, by his conqueror, became absolutely necessary to disarm their undistinguishing fury, and stop the progress of destruction.

The instant that the death of the tyrant Ravan and the rout of his army were known in his capital, his injured and insulted queen hastened to prostrate herself at the feet of Rama, deprecating his vengeance, and denying all acquiescence in the guilty conduct of her husband towards the unfortunate Sita. Ram received her with great kindness and commiseration: and, after commanding her to undergo the accustomed ordeal of fire, by walking over plates of iron heated red-hot, gave her in marriage to the tyrant's brother, his confederate and friend, according to an ancient law of Hindostan, which, not less than the Levitical code, allowed the nuptial union with the widow of a deceased brother. But now his whole soul burned with impatient ardour to liberate and embrace his beloved, his faithful, Sita. He was immediately transported, in his rose-litter, to the fatal tree under which she had so long languished in the adamantine bonds of enchantment, now burst asunder by the death of Ravan; and their mutual rapture at meeting, after so protracted a period of separation, can be conceived but not expressed. Ram, however, resolutely refused all cohabitation with his charming wife, till she had gone through the most dreadful ordeals of unsullied virtue; till she had trampled, unhurt, the glowing embers; dared the bite of the venomous serpent; and, in the pride and fortitude of conscious innocence, exposed herself to the rage of goaded elephants and tigers, expiring in the pangs of famine.

Having firmly established the brother of Ravan on the throne of Ceylon, Ram prepared to return to his hereditary dominions: but, as an immense slaughter had been made of Hanuman's army, and as, without their restoration to life, he must henceforth have reigned a king without subjects, Ram, exerting the omnipotent power of an incarnate deity, re-animated their lifeless bodies: another glaring proof that the Metem-

pychosis was the doctrine principally intended to be inculcated by this distinguished Avatar. The resuscitated army then urged back their course to the continent, over the bridge erected by their labour; and the legend relates, that, at the command of Ram, the principal stones that formed it were carried back by the apes, to the mountains whence they had been hewn; but, unfortunately for its veracity, those stones, of the vast dimensions stated above, still remain, and incontestibly prove, what I have all along asserted to be the basis of the Indian legends, the history of some stupendous convulsion of nature, or other physical phenomenon, blended with the detail of some great historical fact, such as is likely to have taken place in the infancy of the world, when half mankind, inflamed by religious feuds, or animated by the thirst of power, was embattled against the other half.

Ram, having refreshed his native forces in the kingdom of Hanuman, and restored to that depopulated realm its former inhabitants, marched on to his capital in Bahar in all the majesty of a god and all the splendour of a conqueror. He also prevailed on Hanuman, after making Suckeridge, the prince of apes and his oldest general, his vice-gent during his absence, with a select band of those mountaineers, to accompany him thither; and it was, probably, in their progress to Owdh, that the rites adopted afterwards in the Greek Dionysia, or feasts of Bacchus, (in other words the Indian Bhāgavat,) were first celebrated. Harnessed tigers (an animal, it should be observed, abundant in India, but not known in Greece) dragged the chariot of the triumphant Ram; the sprightly notes of the Indian pipe and tabor were heard responsive to the wild air of Indian Bacchæ, attendants on the recovered Sita; and the louder cymbals poured melody in unison with the antic dance of the jocund satyrs. Ram, at some distance from his capital, was met by his enraptured parents and relatives, who brought him, in profusion, all the rich and splendid offerings usually made in India at the shrine of royalty crowned with conquest; showers of rose and other sweet-scented waters were sprinkled over himself and his faithful band, who had shared his toils and his glory; the social betel was lavishly distributed,

and the choicest perfumes of Asia were burned to their honour, refreshing the languid spirit, and filling the air with ambrosial fragrance. Ram flourished, according to the Hindoo legends, eleven thousand lunar years on the throne of Owdh; at the end of which, he retired with his wife to the Vaicontha, or paradise of Vishnu, leaving two sons behind him, Chus and Lavan, who inherited his virtues and jointly shared

his regal honours.* With Ramachandra expired the Treta-Yug, or second age of the world; in which one-third part of mankind became reprobate; a period containing three Avatars, consonant to their gradual decrease in every successive age, and consisting of 2,400,000 years.

* Roger, p. 166; Sonnerat, vol. i. p. 26; Balaëus apud Churchill, vol. iii. p. 865; and Sir William Jones, in Asiatic Researches, vol. ii. p. 123.

THE LIFE OF CREESHNA.

PART II.—CONTAINING THE EXPLOITS OF CREESHNA, AFTER THE DESTRUCTION OF CANSA, TO THE DEATH OF JARASANDHA. (*continued*).

His arrival occasioned a prodigious ferment through the whole town; for neither man nor woman was ignorant of the wonderful feats of Creeshna, and they all ran forth to behold him, with one voice exclaiming, "O Vidhata! make this a day worthy of conquest and victory for Rokemenee, for whom Seesoopal is by no means qualified." On the day of marriage, after various preceding ceremonies, the women led Rokemenee out of the city to worship Ambeka-Deva amid a multitude of singers and musicians, and guards ranged on all sides. When they came to the place of worship, the guards, &c., remained on the outside of the temple, and the musicians, &c., with a vast crowd, stood before the door. Rokemenee and the women went in, the former praying to Deva Bhavani to unite her with Bhagavan, as had been the incessant tenor of her prayers. Then she washed her hands and feet, and went through all the preparations for the Pooja; but, when she bowed her head in the Dendevet, she said, in her heart, "O Deva Bhavani! to thee I bow for the desire of my soul, which is Creeshna." With Rokemenee all the women joined in that ejaculation who were present and assisting in the preparatives of the Pooja. On that day Rokemenee fasted the whole day, remaining in profound silence, and, on going away, bowed her head to the ground on the Deva's threshold. Rokemenee had then a lotos-flower in her hand, and a ring of valuable jewels on her finger, so resplendent, that the Apsarus beheld it from heaven, and said, "This cannot

be Rokemenee? it is Ambeka-Deva herself." In short, her beauty and elegance struck even ethereal spectators with astonishment, and the guards, in a transport, fell down before her, unconscious that their bows escaped from their hands. Rokemenee, in hopes that Bhagavan would appear, walked very slowly forward; and, as the procession for the performance of the Pooja was of great length, her hair was wet with perspiration, resembling the morning dew in the cup of the hyacinth. Looking on all sides earnestly round, she soon perceived an army approaching, which she immediately conceived to belong to the monarch of her heart; and, in the excess of her joy, her feet refused to move forwards. Creeshna, like a ravenous lion, (with Balbadur before him) burst through the throng, and, taking Rokemenee by the hand, placed her instantly on his own carriage, and carried her triumphantly away. Numbers of the guards, mounted on the fleetest horses beheld the scene with amazement and stupefaction; and, when the news came to Seesoopal, and Sal, and Dentebeektree, and Poorende, they were overwhelmed with grief and vexation. But Jarasandha was more inflamed with anger than all, and, in his rage, exclaimed, "This is surely most astonishing, that, in the presence of so many crowned heads as are here assembled, this cowherd should make so bold an effort, and succeed in taking away Rokemenee."

The several rajahs, however, immediately set out and pursued Creeshna with their respective armies; and

Creeshna and Ram, aware of the pursuit, drew in their reins, and waited for them in serene composure. Then all at once began to rain a storm of arrows upon Creeshna and Ram, which Creeshna parried with his arrow; but Rokemenee, who had never seen a battle, was exceedingly terrified at the shower of arrows that fell around her, and elung close to Bhagavan; who bid her be of good courage, and observe how quickly he would slay them all. Balhadur took his weapons, the Kel and Moosel, and with them slew the elephants, broke the chariots, and levelled with the dust both horse and horseman, while, with his foot, he spurned all the infantry to death. Only Jarasandha, and Seesopal, and Sal, and Denteebektree, and Poo-rendee, remained alive, and attempted to save themselves by flight; but Creeshna caught Seesopal alive, and, after much scoffing and ironically declaiming on the fickleness of fortune, observed, that he himself, after defeating Jarasandha seventeen times, was worsted in the eighteenth; although he gloried not in victory nor despaired in defeat; and even now he did not vaunt, though he had carried away Rokemenee from so numerous an assemblage of monarchs. After these bitter taunts he gave him his liberty, and Seesopal slunk away with downcast and sorrowful looks, while the Yadavas acquired prodigious booty from their routed enemies. Rajah Bhekhem soon heard of this defeat and of the slaughter of the armies, which made Rokem all on fire with rage and jealousy, and taking his arms, he swore in presence of all the rajahs, that, if he did not take Creeshna and Ram prisoners, he would no longer be accounted a man. Immediately assembling an army of one Kshouheenee, and, filling his quiver with arrows, he set off to give them battle. When he approached them, he exclaimed with a loud voice to them to stop, and not consider him as another Seesopal. Creeshna immediately checked his horses, and Rokem again began to threaten what Rokemenee's five brothers, so well known throughout India for their valour, would do, and declared that those whom Creeshna had hitherto conquered were not true Kettris. After vaunting for some time in this manner, he discharged three arrows successively. Creeshna

parried them with his own arrow, and then shot six others: with four of those he killed the four horses of the carriage, with the fifth he extended the charioteer senseless, and the sixth cut away the flag of his standard. Rokem instantly launched at his foe five arrows, but they all missed. With another arrow Bhagavan broke his bow, and Rokem then had recourse to his other arms, and alternately used his spear, his gun, his battle-axe, and every other weapon he possessed, all of which Creeshna broke with his arrows, so that Rokem was reduced to a state of inactivity and disgrace, and with grief and rage approached Bhagavan as a moth flies round a taper, irresistibly attracted by its splendour. Creeshna drew his sword, and was going to cut off his head, but Rokemenee started up trembling and affrighted, which averted Creeshna from his bloody purpose, and made him smile. Rokemenee acknowledged her brother's guilt, but pleaded successfully for his life; so Creeshna only tied his hands behind his back, and, with another arrow, struck off all the hair from his head and beard, while Ram and the other Yadavas slew the whole Kshouheenee of troops. Ram laughed exceedingly when he came to Creeshna and saw the unfortunate plight to which Rokem was reduced, and said, it would have been a thousand times better for him to have been slain in battle, when he would have gone instantly to paradise, than to be reduced to such a disgraceful figure; for that even his own wife must now desert him as an object of disgust and horror. Then turning to Rokemenee, he said, "Be not angry with me, for joy and grief are born twins from the womb of eternity." And now he ironically remonstrated with Creeshna for his cruelty, while the warrior's best attribute was mercy. In the mean time Rokem was tortured with anguish; and, in despair reflected on the oath he had taken in presence of all the rajahs, he himself being now a captive instead of Ram and Creeshna; and, dreading to show his face among his friends, staid where he was. Rajah Bhekhem presented to Creeshna the accustomed presents for the marriage-portion; and took leave. Thence Creeshna went to Dwaraka, where very great rejoicings were made for his return. They had all

heard the account of his carrying away Rokemenee in the presence of so many crowned heads, and of the flight of Jarasandha and the other noble warriors, as well as the state to which Rokem had been reduced. Devaci met Creeshna and Rokemenee at the palace, and conducted them to the bridal apartments.

Creeshna, about this period, from his great affection and friendship for the Pandoos, returned to Hastanapoor, and they, like dead men revived, went out to meet him. Creeshna acknowledging Judishter for his senior, went forward to salute him, with his eyes fixed on his feet, and laid his head at Judishter's feet and also at Bheema's, and took Arjoon in his arms, while Nacul and Sahadeva kissed Bhagavan's feet. After seeing the Pandoos, Creeshna waited upon Koontee, who, covering his head and eyes, took him in her arms and wept. Bheema, at the same time, smiling, told her it was a day to rejoice in and not to weep. Koontee then spoke for some time of the difficulties to which her children had been reduced, and that all her reliance was placed upon Creeshna. After her, Judishter opened his mouth in praise of Bhagavan, and said, "Surely I have performed some extraordinary acts of piety in a former life, since your august foot, which neither the Yogee by Yug, nor the Tepe-swee by Tepe, can obtain, hath vouchsafed to come to me!" and recommended himself to his divine protection. Creeshna staid a full year in Hastanapoor to gratify the Pandoos: and one day he mounted Arjoon's carriage as driver, and they went together to the forest, and in Arjoon's ensign was the figure of an ape. On that day Arjoon hunted, with great success, lions, tigers, bears, boars, and transfixed very many stags with his arrows, so that he sent some of the venison to Rajah Judishter: and, being dry with the fatigue of the chase, he went to the bank of the Jumna to drink of the sweet and clear water, and they sat there for some hours looking at the waves, when, by chance, they saw a beautiful girl who seemed earnestly looking after some person. Arjoon, by Creeshna's desire, went up to her and asked what she sought after, thus wandering alone in the desert? She answered, "Koorneste, I am the daughter of the Sun, and am in search of a hus-

band, being determined to have none but Creeshna: and, if you should say that Creeshna will not have me, alas! alas! that granter of the desires of the world, and understander of the situation of the suitors, will surely at some time be propitious to me. Kaleenderee is my name: my father made me a place here in this water to stay till Creeshna should arrive." Arjoon, coming to Creeshna, began to laugh exceedingly, and wished him much joy of the adventure; for, that the girl had been in search for him, and now she had found him; and how happy his destiny was, that, wherever he went, the handsome girls followed him. Creeshna then placed Kaleenderee in the carriage, and they went to Hastanapoor, where he ordered Vesookerma to build her a fine house, which was finished that same day, and Kaleenderee resided in it, and he indulged her in all the wishes of her heart. Creeshna thus staid one year in Hastanapoor, which seemed but a single day to his friends. When that year expired, Kama-Deva presented him with a bow, with two white horses, with a quiver that was never empty; and a shield for Arjoon; and Maya, the Ditya, whom Arjoon had preserved from the fire, built him a Devankhaneh, or council chamber, all of crystal, which the jealous Doorjoodhen beheld with rage and envy. Creeshna having thus powerfully manifested his protection of the Pandoos, returned to Dwaraka, taking Kaleenderee with him.

Rajah Koosela, monarch of Kooselya, who was also called Mekhenjeet, had a daughter named Seeta, and in his circle were seven bulls. He had made a promise, that, whoever should overcome these seven bulls, he would give his daughter to him. Creeshna having heard of this promise, went to Kooselya. Seeta had knowledge of his coming, and said to herself, "My felicity will then only be complete when the son of Devaci shall make Pangrehen with me. The print of the foot of that Yadoopetee is like the flower on the head of Brahma who sprang from the lotus, and Roodra Mahadevais ever in search of that place; the honour, therefore, of kissing that foot is reserved for the fortunate alone. Neither is it repugnant to his mercy to attend to my prayer: for, although that august personage hath no desire for any

beautiful women, yet it is his peculiar excellence not to be forgetful of any one that seeks him. O I shall feel myself raised to the state of a Devata could I but be enrolled in the list of his attendants!" Creeshna, arriving at Koo-selya, told Mekhenjeyt, that he had long been desirous to see him; and, as he had recently heard of his promise concerning the conquest of the seven bulls, he was come to combat with them. "Although," said he, "O Mekhenjeyt! I am not on a level with monarchs, and have no intention to make myself equal with the mighty, yet, as in this case no difference is expressed between high and low, chance must decide the event." Rajah Mekhenjeyt answered, that the truly great never praised themselves, that Creeshna's fame was not unknown to the world, that he was very happy to see him; and that, if he had visited him sooner, the proclamation for a public competition and contest should never have been made. Creeshna then asked where the seven bulls were. The rajah told his servant to prepare a place for the conflict, and great numbers of rajahs and rajahpoots were collected to behold it, while Creeshna prepared himself to attack them. The seven bulls were brought in bound with chains of iron: the very sight of them diffused a general terror, and it was difficult to loose their chains. Creeshna dividing himself into seven distinct persons, intrepidly approached the bulls, and, like a child taking a goat by the ear, caught them all seven, put a halter into each of their nostrils, and made them perfectly submissive and tamè. Rajah Mekhenjeyt rejoiced exceedingly that the performer of this fête was Yadoopetee; the Devatas in heaven, as well as men on earth, were all gladdened by the event, and, in a fortunate moment, Rajah Mekhenjeyt married his daughter to Creeshna. At that happy marriage Devatas and Vidyadheres attended in transport; the mother of Secta too was at the summit of bliss. Rajah Mekhenjeyt gave as a marriage-portion 10,000 milch-cows, 3,000 pounds weight of jewels, with very valuable chains, 9,000 elephants, 90,000 carriages, ten times as many horses as carriages, and ten times as many slaves as horses, and, besides these, other articles out of number; after which Creeshna departed. The

other rajahs all conceived extreme envy and jealousy that so very beautiful a princess with prodigious wealth should be taken away by a Gopa; therefore, collecting their troops together; they pursued Creeshna; but, such was their appearance, that one would say they were a parcel of vagabonds and beggars come out of the city to demand charity; and when they came near, they all hung their heads down upon their breasts. Then Arjoon, who was with Creeshna, turned about, and strung his famous bow Kandevas, when they all fled away from that renowned warrior like a huge flock of kids from a wolf, and Creeshna, by gentle and easy stages, proceeded on to Dwaraka. There was a rajah named Soot-Keret, who had a daughter named Bhedera, whom he married to Creeshna in spite of his sons, who opposed the match. There was also another rajah who had a daughter named Lechmeena, who had been adopted by Sooneter, and from him Shree-Creeshna had her in the mode of Pangrehen. These are the eight Nayega whom Bhagavan first espoused; and now will be given an account of a great number of rajah's daughters whom he released from the captivity in which they were kept by Bhoom Assoor Ditya.

Bhoom Assoor Ditya, son of the Earth, was so mighty and powerful, that he threw even Soorg-Loke into confusion, and drove Eendra from Eendra-Pooree, and set up his own government there, after grievously harassing Eendra. Then leaving a deputy of his own in Soorg, he returned to his own city, which was called Prag-Jothek; and he had round his castle a defence of fire, and water, and poisonous snakes, and a white mountain like quicksilver. One day, Seete-Bhavani expressed a wish to see the trees of Soorg; and Creeshna, immediately taking her along with him upon Garoori, said, "We must first see the person who has driven Eendra out of Soorg;" so they went to the city of Prag-Jothek. Bhagavan first, with the arrow of his might, threw down the quicksilver mountain, and Garoori, by his command, devoured all the castle of snakes. He commanded the rain also to descend in so violent a manner, that the castle of fire was reduced to ashes; while, from the fierce look of that Lord of the three lokes,

the castle of water was dried up. Then he sounded the great shell Panchajanya, and the hemisphere re-choed with the noise: at the sound thereof, the hearts of all the pious persons in that city were turned towards Creeshna, while those of the guilty were struck with fear and amazement. Bhoom, with his five heads, was at that time asleep; but, as the noise awakened him, he began to reflect that on earth he had left no mighty warrior alive, and that in Soorg no one was greater than Eendra, whom he had thrust out from Eendra-Pooree. He, therefore, came forth in a great rage, terrible as the sun of the last day, with a Treesoole (trident weapon) in his hand, and, seeing Creeshna, struck Garoori on the breast, at the same time bellowing with a mighty voice from each of his five mouths. Treesenek Ditya, one of his servants, now came forward and represented to him that he demeaned himself in his paltry engagement, and offered to take it entirely upon himself. Treesenek had a Geda in his hand, which he struck with all his might at Bhagavan, who shivered it with his Van. Treesenek took another Geda, which Creeshna parried, and asked Seete-Bhavani if she was afraid, adding, that there was no cause for alarm or grief. Creeshna then urged Garoori a few steps forward, at which time he cut off Treesenek's three heads, and turned them round, as Eendra, with his Kothare, cut off the tops of the three branches of Soomeeroo. Treesenek had sons, whom he called Reheeberwen, who, being exceedingly affected with their father's death, and knowing Bhoom for their lord and protector, came to the conflict and prepared to fight with every species of weapon; but they wasted their strength in vain, their utmost efforts were of no avail, for Creeshna broke all their weapons like a grain of Sesame. He then severed each of their heads from their bodies: and, by the efficacy of Creeshna's omnipotence, the hands and feet of all the soldiers fell from their arms and thighs. Bhoom, now, in great anger, driving his elephants before him, advanced towards Creeshna; and at that time, in the sight of Bhoom Assoor, clouds and thunder only appeared. Bhoom Assoor, with the assistance of Maya, sometimes rose up like a fire,

sometimes like water, sometimes like a burning wind, and sometimes like a violent rain, and thus discharged his arrows. But Creeshna so collected his own Maya that the mightiest exertions of his art were entirely fruitless. Those, who were mounted on elephants, Garoori, with his wings, hurried up into the air; those who were in chariots or on horseback, with his talons and claws, like a file, he grated to pieces; while those who were terrified sought their safety in flight. Bhoom, however, did not once turn his back; but, fixing his foot firmly on the ground, and taking a spear in his hand, he whirled it over his heads, and threw it at Creeshna. Now, though the spear was more ponderous than was ever before hurled from a human arm, yet it fell on Creeshna's body lighter than a flower; and, when Bhoom Assoor had exhausted all his rage and strength, Creeshna, taking a Treesoole, cut off all Bhoom's five heads as he sat upon his elephant, and threw them to the ground. All the Devatas rejoiced at the slaughter of Bhoom, and rained down flowers from heaven. The earth, which was Bhoom's mother, came to offer service to Creeshna, and presented him with a Koondel of great cost, and a Vingene-Mala, and other very valuable articles, and made a long speech to propitiate Creeshna; entreating, that, although Bhoom had been most criminal, yet as his Avatar took place for the express purpose of lightening her burthens, that still he would let her behold with her own eyes the extent of his mercy to the defunct. The Earth, indeed, was with heart and soul devoted to Creeshna, and he in return gave her son Mookt. Bhoom Assoor, by force and violence, had carried away every rajah's daughter whom he had heard was beautiful, so that each day when any of those ladies came before him, he beheld her, indeed with his eyes, but immediately thought no more of her. Perasere, the Reyshee, hath observed that he had collected 16,000 of these girls, and other Reyshees say they exceeded that number. Creeshna, after slaying Bhoom, entered his house, and at last came to these young ladies, who, having heard of Creeshna's miracles amid all the calamities of their captivity, had rested their whole reliance upon him for their

release, and had heard his person described ; so that, the moment they saw him, they conceived him to be the deliverer of the world. They all respectfully rose up and most submissively addressed him, praying for relief; adding that, though they were not Hooris, they were desirous at least to be the slaves of his palace, and wives, and the very Dasees (slaves) of his Dasees. Creeshna sent these 16,000 girls, and prodigious wealth, and the elephant Iravet with four teeth, and 6,400 white elephants, and besides them very many other elephants and carriages without number, and horses of the first race, to Dwaraka; and himself, with Seete-Bhavani, proceeded to Eendra-Pooree, whither Eendra had gone after the slaughter of Bhoom Assoor. Eendra, with all his thousand eyes, could not be satisfied with beholding Creeshna, but saluted him with mingled joy and reverence, and prostrated himself seven times before him. Creeshna gave the ear-rings and necklace which he had received from Bhoom's mother to the mother of Eendra. Eendra, with his hands joined before him, said he had brought the tree of Pareejatek according to order, and he laid it on Garoori's back; so, when Creeshna returned to Dwaraka, the tree was planted in Seete-Bhavani's court. Thither came the bees of Soorg attracted by the blossoms of Pareejatek; and Creeshna in an instant, multiplying his own person into 16,000, went to the palace of each, and, by joy and pleasure, dissipated the grief and pining of them all. These young and modest creatures knew not at first how to behave, but hung down their heads with mingled shame and bashfulness. Creeshna saw their confusion, and taught them how to look and how to laugh; he behaved with such kindness to them, as greatly increased their affection for him; and, in a short time, instructed them in all the rules and ceremonies of the haram, and in all such qualifications as are expected from their sex and condition.

The Creator of the world, who had come into existence for the protection of the Davatas and his devotees, for the nourishment of milch cows, and for the destruction of Cansa, had built Dwaraka with unspeakable magnificence. All the walls were so studded with

brilliant jewels that there was no need of lamps in the night. The canopies to all the houses were suspended by strings of pearl, whose lustre illuminated earth and heaven; and, by the odour of the flowers of Pareejatek, the courts and gardens of Dwaraka were all scented. To describe the full splendour of Dwaraka would be an endless labour. One day Creeshna was sitting in his magnificent palace among those who conceived themselves his relations; one his father, another his son, another his brother, &c. &c.; and Rokemenee, dressed in all her richest jewels and choicest habiliments, exhibited the full display of her beauty, when Creeshna, to try her temper and give her charms a new mode of lustre under the influence of anger, began jocosely to taunt her with having refused so excellent a match as Scesopal, and for having been so forward as to send her Brahmin to him at a time that he had made her no advances, and certainly was not in love with her. In this style of keen but good-humoured satire he tormented her so much, that at last she turned pale and descended from her seat: she stood for some time before him in the utmost shame and distress, unable to utter a syllable, and at length fell down senseless to the ground. Creeshna found by this that she could not bear the pressure of grief, and, pitying her situation, rose up with his hair dishevelled, and, taking her to one side, pressed her to his breast, and dried her tears with his robe. By these means he brought her to herself, and told her that all he had said had been in jest, and only to try her affections, of which he now had no sort of doubt. By much gentleness and many soft expressions he at length completely restored her peace of mind, and she then entered into a full and clear explanation of everything which he had objected to her, assuring him that she had not the presumption to conceive herself the *wife* of him, the dust of whose feet, not only men and Devatas, but Brahma and Roodra, the most exalted of Devatas, sought with earnest devotion: that she considered herself as the *slave* of his slaves; that she knew him for the Creator of the world, and that Seesopal himself was but a creature of his; that, had she been wife to Seesopal, she should

still have been subject to the miseries of transmigration, from which, by her present connection, she flattered herself she was for ever liberated. That his black colour, which, to men of dark conceptions appeared merely sable, in her sight was the brilliant pupil of the eye of the universe: that, undoubtedly, all that he had said to her was just, and she bowed submissive to all his censures; and she concluded by again declaring that she did not call herself his *wife*, but the meanest of his *slaves*. Creeshna again assured her that his fondness for her was undiminished, that he had only tempted her in jest, and that the gold of her fidelity was now tried on the touchstone of experience, and found pure. That her patience and forbearance were most exemplary in never having given vent to improper or harsh language, even when he had bound her brother Rokem's hands behind him and cut off his hair, but had confined herself to supplication and submission; nor even when Balhadur cut off his head did she suffer the violence of her anguish to get the better of her discretion, and that he had come to her assistance the moment he had received her letter, not because of her beauty, but on account of her excellent temper. Thus the affair ended; and in the same manner did Creeshna behave to all the 16,000 to promote mirth and pleasure. He was assiduous to fulfil all the customs and duties of domestic life, and from morning to evening acted as became a Greheste.

Each of these eight Nayege* bore Creeshna ten sons; so also each of the 16,000 bore him ten sons: Rokemenee, however, was the chief favourite, the others never really inspired him with love, notwithstanding their exquisite beauty; but neither Brahma, nor Roodra, nor Eendra, could attain to the rank and dignity which the eight Nayege acquired by their fidelity and attachment. Their names are as follows: Rokemenee, Setee-Bhavani, Jamoometa, Kalenderee, Lechmeena, Seeta, Bhedravete, Mhirbinda.

In the mean time, Ram, recollecting

* Perhaps the word Nayege is the feminine of Naig, formerly a title of Hyder Ally. —Halhed.

Nanda, and Yasodha, and his former pleasures with the Gopias, one morning early set out for Bindreben. On his arrival there, all were overjoyed: Nanda and Yasodha kissed him, and were eager to tell him that his long absence had appeared to them a whole Yug: then they anxiously solicited tidings concerning Creeshna. They had heard of the wonderful splendour and magnificence in which they lived, and lamented that he was removed to Dwaraka, whither their occupations and age equally prevented them from going: and, in respect to Vasudeva, whom, however unhappy he had been while in confinement at Mathura, they at least had some opportunities of seeing, they could now hope to see him no more, since he also was removed to Dwaraka. Ram made himself acceptable to all, both old and young, and particularly endeavoured to comfort and console the Gopias, who were quite overpowered with joy at again beholding him, and began to talk altogether concerning Creeshna, and at once to blame and lament his absence; then they asked after the children of the eight Nayege and of the 16,000 Rajagees, and wished them all manner of happiness. Others desired to know if those 16,000 were all dutiful and obedient wives? and thus by degrees they worked themselves into an agony of passion, and all wept and wailed exceedingly. Balhadur endeavoured to pacify them; and, at last, seeing there was no remedy but patience, and that he consoled them to the utmost in his power in the name of Creeshna, they began to be more tranquil. Balhadur stayed there the two months of spring, and one morning he went to the banks of the Jumna, the Gopias accompanying him. The soft wind blowing cool and perfumed from the water, and its flowers playing a prelude to desire, Balhadur, sometimes bathing in the stream and sometimes recumbent on the bank, enjoyed all sorts of pleasure and delight with the Gopias. Varuna, the Devata, now brought him a musical instrument, and Ram and all the Gopias became intoxicated with the melody which issued from that jungle; they indulged in violent fits of laughter, the effect of excessive pleasure, and sang without any fear or restraint, till at length, what

with singing, dancing, and a thousand sportive gambols, they were all in a profuse perspiration, and it shone upon their cheeks like drops of dew on the flowers. Ram, in his fit of intoxication, stretched out his hand to the Jumna several times, and called upon the River to come personally to him. After waiting some time, and receiving no answer from the water, he grew angry, and said, "Jumna, thou wilt presently appear when I shall have cut thee into seven pieces." Then he rose, and taking up his weapon, the Kel,* he placed it on the bank. The Jumna was exceedingly alarmed and trembled with fear, and, appearing before him, said, "O, Balhadur! thou Avatar of Scshanaga, who has the earth on his head, to thee I bow with reverence. Thou art Creeshna! and before thee, as Creeshna, I now appear: do with me as seems good unto thee." Thus did the Jumna humble itself before Ram, who then became appeased, and taking up his Kel, went back to Bindreben. Then Varuna Deva presented him with a Neelamber, and a precious chain, and a string of pearls. Thus did Baldahur remain two months, with all manner of satisfaction, in Bindreben.

Nared one day felt himself extremely perplexed when he considered that Creeshna should be called Bhagavat-Perebrahme, and yet that he should be so much attached to women. Again he reflected that, whereas, a man has more than enough with one wife, how could Creeshna conduct himself with 16,000? Does he enjoy them in rotation, or by his power and might, has he all of them always with him? This Nared determined to see for himself, and learn the truth; accordingly he went to Dwaraka. On arriving at the skirts of the town he was delighted with the sight of the gardens full of flowers in fresh bloom; and round all the environs were houses for devotees, which added beauty to the city, like amulets, against malignant eyes tied round the arm. Learned Brahmins

were every where chanting the Vedas, like intoxicated bees buzzing around aromatic Nenuphar. Geese and Sares's (called by us Cyrus's) adorned the banks of the water, and lotos's beautified its surface. He beheld houses for 300,000 men, all of lofty architecture and built of crystal, the windows of diamonds and precious stones of every colour, and embroidered canopies before all the houses. All the streets and lanes were entirely free from dust and filth: there were also many curiously-painted temples adorned with water-gilding. The shops in the bazaars, with pillars on every side, were all set out to the best advantage, and the palaces of the great were superb beyond all description, uniting magnificence with elegance. The houses of the eight Nayege and 16,000 wives of Creeshna were built in a line by themselves with the utmost symmetry, beauty, and splendor. Nared, on approaching them, beheld the pillars of every house formed of coral, and the courts and Serais embellished with jewels; canopies of cloth of gold were everywhere suspended with valuable strings of the finest pearl; beautiful children were playing in the courts; while charming slave-girls were diligently attending their several mistresses. The peacocks on the house tops were rejoicing and singing in the exhalation, which arose, from the constant burning of aromatics, in such quantity, as to form a cloud that resembled the rainy season, and numberless rubies that were distributed about the buildings preserved a constant light over the place. Nared, with all his curiosity of inspection, could not distinguish between the slaves and the mistresses. In the first house which he entered he beheld 1,000 maids, perfectly handsome, standing with their hands joined before them round their lady, who, with a fly-flap, the handle set with jewels, was preventing Creeshna from being molested with flies.

* Kel means a scythe, *i. e.*, the blade of it, the third Ram being considered, in India, as the patron of agriculture. Cyrus is, in the same manner, said to have cut the River Gyndes into small portions, out of revenge for one of the horses sacred to the sun having been drowned in it. The one story is probably a copy of the other.

FREE-THINKERS' INFORMATION FOR THE PEOPLE.

"LET ALL HAVE FULL LIBERTY TO TEACH AND MAINTAIN WHATEVER OPINIONS THEY
MAY CHOOSE."—*Melancthon.*

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THE WORLD'S PANTHEON; OR, THE PICTURE GALLERY OF SUPERSTITION.

NO. XI.—THE EIGHTH AVATAR, OR VISHNU INCARNATE IN THE PERSON OF
CREESHNA.



The Life of Crishna, or Creeshna, which we commenced in Number 39, constitutes the eighth Avatar, as Creeshna is Vishnu incarnate. We need only call attention to the many points of resemblance between the life of Creeshna and the events narrated in the New Testament, together with the great similarity in the names of the principal personages, to induce the conclusion that Christianity is but a modified copy of ancient Hindooism. But to resume the life of Creeshna.

When Nared came in, Bhagavan spied him at a distance, and rising from his Musnud, went to meet him, laid his head at Nared's feet, and welcomed him. Nared was ashamed of so great an honour, and made an apologising speech. Creeshna then washed Nared's feet, and poured that water on his own head; after which, he seated Nared in the place of honour, paid him worship, and made the mistress of the house do the same. Nared, in a transport of wonder and delight, exclaimed, "O

Natha! no one can fathom thy mercy and benevolence! thy Avatar is for the purpose of protecting the good and punishing the wicked. If it be thy august will to perform services to Nared, it is as a father and mother perform service for their children, out of their own voluntary affection and good-will. Men, who are submerged in the pit of their passions, have no possibility of escaping from their control, except by thy mercy, in being born again in this transient world."

Thus did Nared utter various praises and thanksgivings; yet did his mind still misgive him, and he determined to go to another house to see if he should find Creeshna there, or if he would take the first opportunity of going thither. He went, therefore, with speed to the next house, and there he found Creeshna sitting and amusing himself with the mistress of it. On seeing Nared, Creeshna rose up as before, received him with the utmost reverence, respectfully thanked him for the honour his house received from his visit, and hoped he would stay there some days. Thence Nared went to a third house, where Creeshna was looking at the children at play; and, in a fourth house, he was bathing. Nared suspected that Creeshna had come by some secret way from the former house with such haste as to get before him, and therefore determined that he would hurry as fast as possible to another to ascertain the fact: so he ran with all expedition to the next house, and there he found Creeshna sitting at a banquet. At another he was giving alms to the Brahmins; at another he was practising at his weapons; at another he was re-

viewing the ordinary elephants and horses; at another he was in conference with Oodhoo and Akroor; at another he was sitting and hearing the songs of the beautiful slave girls; at another he was distributing milch cows in charity; at another he was hearing the Poo-ranus; at another he was laughing and joking with the mistress of the house; at another he was performing the Howm; at another he was exercising Dherme; at another he had set the women to quarrel, and was amusing himself with looking on; at another he was pacifying a dispute among them; at another he was sitting with Ram; at another he was preparing a marriage-portion, or Dheek; at another he was rejoicing at being returned from his son's wedding; at another he was digging a well or tank; at another he was preparing for the chase. In this manner did Nared enter the houses of the eight Nayega and of the 16,000 wives, and in every one of them he found Creeshna differently engaged, so that he was altogether astonished and confounded. Creeshna, at length, appeared, and thus addressed him: "O Nared! these secret doubts and suspicions which have so perplexed thee, are no fault of mine, but of thine own mind. On subjects where the wisdom even of Devatas is confused, what can be said of man's limited understanding? Ask each of my wives separately whether she ever thinks me absent from her; she will answer that I am never for a moment from her sight." Nared humbled himself and confessed his weakness, that he was bewildered by Maya, and submissively implored Creeshna's mercy in his behalf. Creeshna answered, "O Nared! I am the sole Kerta. My acts are inscrutable; nor must any suspicions be cherished, nor any distraction of mind be endured, on account of them, nor any idle fancies and curiosity be indulged. Perplex not thyself farther, but quietly pursue thine own affairs, and make mankind happy with thy presence and conversation." Nared, however, was several times subject to the same distraction; but, at length, calling on the name of Narayen and playing on his Veena, he departed. Creeshna, in the meantime, employing himself in the functions of a Grehecharee, regulated the affairs

of his families and children, while each of his wives conceived that Creeshna preferred none to herself, and that he wished for no other.

Creeshna acted in all his domestic concerns precisely according to the institutes of the Vedas for masters of families, and daily increased in confidential intercourse with his respective wives, who severally returned it. Rokemence, however, enjoyed the pre-eminence of esteem. This was Creeshna's way of life: he rose every morning at the time of Brehemenee Mhooret, and went punctually through the various ceremonies and devout exercises prescribed by the Brahmins, and all those purifications appointed for the purpose of Prachheete for the actions proper to human nature, which every day are committed. If it be asked how could there be supposed any necessity for Prachheete in that pure essence, the answer is, that it is by reason of his coming in a material form. After the Prate-Sendhya, he washed, and then went to salute and pay Nemeskar to his father and mother, and the elders of the family. At mid-day and at evening he again performed the prescribed devotions and ablutions; and at the time of each Sandhya, as well as at his meals, he spoke to no one, because this is recommended as profitable to every one by the rules of the Vedas; for the good of the speaker at such times is transferred to the person addressed, and his evil reverts to the speaker. He performed Terpen in respect of the Devatas, Reyshees, Muni-Eswaras, and Zennardars; after which he distributed cows with gilt horns to the Brahmins; and necklaces of pearl, and silver, and silk clothes, and much Sesame, to Zennardars of good conduct and learning. But of young milch-cows, having calves of beautiful forms and good tempers, he every day gave a certain number more than the day before, and uttered Mantras and Slokas: afterwards he went to dinner. First he set apart one morsel from each meal in respect of Jegedeish, and performed Dyhan, and called to mind his own figure. The second morsel he took into his mouth in the name of Perebrahmec; for every day certain Zennardars were appointed who gave him his food. After eating, he dressed

and put on fine garments, and rubbed himself with sandal, and other perfumed waters, and regaled himself with the odour of them, first giving some to the Zennardars and then serving himself. Every day he beheld the reflection of his own face on Ghee, with gold and silver vessels, and gave orders for supplying victuals and clothes for his wives, and children, and dependants of all kinds. His carriages and horses were always in readiness. Sometimes he rode in his chariot with Satek, sometimes with Oodhoo, and sometimes alone. When he went from his palace, his jewel-studded carriage glistened like the sun, and the women of the city mounted on their roofs to behold it as long as it was visible. Dareke, the charioteer, guided the reins. When he sat with the Yadavas in his assembly, which surpassed the council of Eendra, it would be degrading it to compare that assembly to the moon and stars shining in midnight glory.

One morning after public devotion, there arrived at Dwaraka a messenger, who, on being admitted to the palace, thus delivered his charge: "O thou who givest kings their thrones, hast thou not heard of Jarasandha how he boasts his superiority over all other men of renown! Whosoever he sallies forth for the purpose of conquest, over the four points of the world, he leaves to those who submit and become his subjects their rank and property, and grants them peace; but whosoever opposes him is taken prisoner and kept in confinement. I come an ambassador from those wretched state-prisoners, who, having heard of thy glory both on sea and land, have sent me to thy august presence to sue for protection. Therefore, O thou destroyer of the unjust! forget not us miserable captives, but free us from the chains of the tyrant. Man is stricken by outward circumstances, and, mistaking evil for good, becomes forgetful of thee; but he who knows and remembers thee is free from all error. We, too, ignorant and short-sighted mortals knew not thy truth, but thought Jarasandha the chief and head of the kingdoms of the earth; but now we are better acquainted with thy mighty and miraculous acts, and that thou wert born in the world to protect the good and punish the wicked. We, therefore,

are also under thy protection, and our loss of honour falls on thee. Our faults and crimes doubtless are many, but look not on them while we are under misfortune; consider thy own name, which is the Pardoner!" After the messenger had uttered this, and much more to the same purpose, Creeshna comforted and dismissed him. In the mean time Nared came into his presence, with his Veena in his hand, calling on the name of Narayen. Creeshna immediately rose from his throne, saluted him with great respect, and placed him in the seat of honour. Nared then played so delightfully on his instrument as to ravish all the hearers. When he had finished, Creeshna demanded of him news of the Pandoos, and how they fared under the tyranny and oppression of Doorjoodhen? Nared answered, "O my lord! with what astonishment I am seized to hear thee ask news of the Pandoos! What being is there in the circle of existence of whom Shree-Creeshna has not the most complete knowledge? But as thou hast had the condescension to ask for information, I am bound to impart it. O Creeshna! at present the Pandoos, relying on thy benevolence, entertain a design to celebrate the Raisoo-Yug;* but, for myself, I am amazed to think where they will be able to make the arrangements for so grand a festival. Yet there are very many rajahs assembled in Hastanapoor, whose expectations are all turned towards Dwaraka. Now, since thy favour is more particularly extended towards the Pandoos than others, certainly thou wilt have the goodness to go thither. O Natha! he who lives in remembrance of thee, be he prince or beggar, assuredly obtains Peremekete, for thy name is equivalent to happiness." Thus did Nared utter Creeshna's praises. Creeshna spoke kindly to him in return, and, calling Oodhoo, asked him his advice if it were not right that he should go to Hastanapoor, since the Pandoos had already commenced the Raisoo-Yug in reliance upon him: and, since it was time that those rajahs, who, being prisoners to Jarasandha, had put themselves under

* The Raisoo-Yug, or feast of rajahs, could only be performed by a monarch who had conquered all the other sovereigns of the world.

his protection, should be released; in short, whether he thought the journey could not be so contrived as at once to accomplish the two desirable objects.

Oodhoo, by his prophetic spirit, knew what was the wish of the principal among the Yadavas, and therefore he answered, "That certainly there was great difficulty in procuring and arranging the necessaries for a Raisoo-Yug, and that Judishter ought first to have weighed his own strength, and have considered how it would be possible for him to reduce to subjection the rajahs of all the eight sides round him, as well as to have consulted his great support, Creeshna, on the subject; but that his present conduct proceeded entirely from his firm reliance and full confidence in Creeshna's friendship, who would indisputably interfere, and bring his expectations to a fortunate issue. He therefore counselled Creeshna to go to Hastanapoor, whence the distance was not very great to Jarasandha's kingdom; who, in consequence of his violence and strength, which surpasses that of 10,000 elephants, thinks no one on earth able to cope with him, yet Bheema is full as strong as Jarasandha. He advised, therefore, that Bheema should present himself in the habit of a Brahmin, and demand alms of Jarasandha, who, being himself a Brahmin, would not fail to say he would give him whatever he should ask. Let Bheema then require Dhermejoodhe, after which, by his own strength and your favour united, he will infallibly conquer him. The journey to Hastanapoor is a good pretext; for Jarasandha will think it undertaken on account of Jndishter's Yug." It should here be remembered that Creeshna, on a former occasion, did not himself crush Jarasandha, and that, by his order, he was not slain by others. In fact, he was fated to die by the hand of Bheema-Seen, and could not be slain until Bheema and Creeshna should be together hostilely inclined in the place where he was. Oodhoo knew this prophetically, and therefore made this proposal: at the same time he reminded Creeshna of the message of the rajahs who were in prison, and whose wives had no other comfort to give their disconsolate children than the hope of relief and release from him. Oodhoo

subjoined, that there was no injustice in destroying Jarasandha to release the others; for that, by this very act, his liberation, from alternately living and dying, would be ensured, and the Yug of Rajah Judishter could proceed only in the event of Jarasandha's subjugation or death. The Yadavas all applauded Oodhoo's advice, and Creeshna ordered a fortunate moment to be chosen for sending forward the advanced baggage: Balhadur, the beauty of the Yadavas, was appointed to accompany it. Pre-demne, and others of his august sons, who stirred not without a signal from Creeshna, were honoured with the permission to be of the party. On the day of march, heaven and earth re-echoed with the sound of the kettle-drums. The eight Nayega all went with them in Palekees, Doolees, &c. and the baggage was mounted on elephants and camels, or conveyed in large waggons: crowns, and thrones, and litters, and armour, and Hejas-Meek-hee, or weapons with a thousand spikes, were all conveyed in great quantities in the field-armoury. The spears in the hands of the young warriors glittered like fishes sparkling in the sea. Select messengers went before and comforted the imprisoned rajahs with assurances that Creeshna was approaching to release them: and Nared, having obtained favour in the sight of Creeshna, returned joyfully home.

Creeshna set forth in all pomp and splendour from Dwaraka; and, passing through the kingdom of Soorethe, came to the confines of Meevat. Judishter came through several stages to meet them, taking with him Brahmins learned in the Vedas, and pious Achar-yas, with music and singing, to swell the procession, and express his joy at the meeting. Creeshna, as younger than Judishter, would have kissed his feet; Judishter anticipated his intention, and fell at Creeshna's feet in tears of rapture. In the records of mankind, beauty and loveliness of person are first numbered from Rajah Bali, from Nacul, and Schedeva; hence most of the Yadavas came eagerly from Dwaraka on purpose to see the two latter. Creeshna, after having saluted the Pandoos, the Brahmins, Acharyas, &c. went forward, surrounded, preceded, and followed, by music and singing.

Every inhabitant of Hastanapoor, male and female, rejoiced at his arrival, and crowded the roofs, windows, and doors, to see him enter, and had be-decked all their houses for their triumph. Great crowds stood in the road to receive him, and the women presented him with flowers of five colours as he passed. All the streets were cleansed from dirt and dust, and sprinkled with perfumed water. The bazaars and squares were all new beautified with golden plaster, and odoriferous woods were burning in all the houses. The brilliant jewels which adorned the doors, of the Pandoos shone like lamps, as if they had been placed there for the purpose of shedding their combined lustre on Creeshna. The women all praised and envied the happiness of the eight Navega, and flocked round Creeshna in adoring multitudes. When Creeshna entered the palace of the Pandoos, Koontee (the mother of three of the five sons of Pandoo) rose up at a distance, and with the tenderest maternal affection held him a long time to her breast, and wept; while he several times laid his head at her feet. Drouacharye and Kerpacharye were there, whom Creeshna saluted with Nemeskar; and the eight Navega were introduced to Koontee and to Droppeda, &c. Rajah Judishter appointed magnificent lodgings and entertainment for all the Yadavas, at the same time making many apologies for the inadequacy of accommodation, and saying that he was exalted to heaven by their arrival. Thus they passed some months in pleasure and delight, but the moments of happiness are never counted.

During this period, Rajah Judishter held an assembly, in which he seated Creeshna above himself; and many famous Gooroos, and all the four casts were there also. At this assembly Judishter reminded Creeshna of his intention to perform the Raisoo-Yug with his aid, of which he did not doubt from his constant kindness to him; although he sometimes did entertain doubts whether one man could be preferred to another in the eyes of him who was the Creator of the world; still, however, he conceived, that as here there was this difference, that one man necessarily had occasion for another's assistance, and with Creeshna there could not possibly

exist the want of aid from any one, so those who faithfully addressed themselves to him obtained the completion of their desires. Creeshna desired him to make himself perfectly easy and satisfied on the subject; that, since he had now expressed publicly his wish to perform the Raisoo-Yug, and his enemies had notice of his intentions, the Creator would certainly make the matter easy to him. That, certainly, though preparations for that Yug were exceedingly difficult, yet he was to be commended for the intention: since Devatas, and Reyshees, and Muni-Eswaras, and Petrees, were all anxious for that Yug, which ennoble the name of the celebrator for ever. "Now, then," said he, "the necessities for the Yug must be prepared; and, first, the monarchs and warriors of all the four quarters must be reduced to your subjection. Your four brothers, who excel the Devatas in glory and renown, will soon cause your authority to be acknowledged in all the four quarters; and even I, who am confined by no one, yet hold myself bound by friendship and esteem for you. Take courage, therefore, and commence the Yug." Judishter, elated by Creeshna's kindness, sent his brothers to the four quarters accordingly; and, in a fortunate moment, Bheema took his way to the west; Arjoon to the north; Nacul, bright as the sun, to the east; and Sehedeva drew his sword to the south. In a small space of time they subdued the rajahs on every side, except only Jarasandha, and brought back with them prodigious booty. After these achievements, Judishter, in conference with Creeshna, stated the difficulty of overcoming Jarasandha; that, without his submission, the Yug could not properly be denominated the Raisoo, and begged his advice. In this interview Oodhoo gave it as his opinion that Jarasandha was superior to all the other monarchs, and that Judishter could not subdue him by force. He proposed, therefore, to make use of stratagem, and recommended that Creeshna, and Bheema, and Arjoon, should go to Jarasandha in the habit of Brahmins; he said that Jarasandha had no rival in liberality, so that if any religious mendicant should demand even his life, he would instantly lay it down for him: that, when those three addressed him in the

habit of Brahmins, and demanded Dhermejoodhe, he would not turn away from their request. "Liberality," said he to Judishter, "is the first duty of monarchs; all that we behold will perish, but the name of the liberal man will endure for ever!" Creeshna, Bheema, and Arjoon, accordingly set off from Hastanapoor in the dress of Zennardars, and addressed themselves to Jarasandha in the name of Nayaren. Jarasandha, the instant he saw them, knew by their speech, the marks of their bodies, and by Arjoon's thumb, (worn by the bow-string,) that they were not Brahmins, but princes of some kingdom; yet he said to them, "O, Brahmins! whatever ye desire, whatever the hand of mendicacy can grasp at, be it a Geda or even a whole kingdom, I shall not turn from your demand; but, as Rajah Bali was driven by the foot of the Bamun-Avatar beneath the earth, yet did not turn his face from Dherme, although warned by Sookra that his suppliant was not a Brahmin; so I, too, fully persuaded that ye are not Brahmins, will yet bestow on you whatever you request." Creeshna stepped forward and demanded Sengram. "And if," said he, "thou dost not perfectly know us, lo! this is Bheema, and this Arjoon, and I am their cousin." Jarasandha looked towards his courtiers and smiled, bidding them admire the insolence of this cow-herd, whom he had already so often caused to run away, happy to have saved his life, and who now demanded another battle. "Well," said he, "I will give you Sengram. You formerly escaped from my hand, and saved your life in the sea; but whither will you now go to save it? Yet it is a disgrace to me to fight with one whom I have already defeated. As to Arjoon, delicately formed as he is, he will certainly never pretend to cope with me in battle; but Bheema seems in vigour and good case, if he hath but courage to meet me." Jarasandha then summoned his whole army, and, divesting Bheema of his Brahmin's dress, asked him with what weapon he chose to engage. Bheema chose the mace. Jarasandha immediately put one into his hand and armed himself with another; and now, first addressing Nemeskar to himself, (as to a god,) and then kissing his hand, he advanced towards Bheema, and the en-

gagement commenced. They were equal in strength, and their maces so violently crashed together as they fought, that the concave of heaven was rent by the sound. Creeshna and Arjoon thought Bheema would soon conquer; Jarasandha's people thought the same of their master; but they still kept their equality, and saved themselves from the blows of the battle-axes, which were all broke to pieces by their hands of adamant. After the maces, they tried their strength with other weapons; and, at last, when the armoury was exhausted, they fought with their fists. It appeared as if they had both learned the science of the pugilist under one master, so equal was their skill. In this manner they passed twenty-seven days, fighting the whole day, and in the evening performing Sendhya, eating together like brothers, and sleeping under the same roof. Bheema, by signs, gave Creeshna to understand that he thought it hard to be exposed to all the danger and mischief, while Creeshna himself remained a quiet spectator; that this contest with Jarasandha began to be too much for him, his ribs being all bruised and broken with the blows of his fists, while Creeshna suffered no inconvenience whatever; and that he would very willingly retreat, but a sense of shame restrained him. Arjoon, on this, was in great terror; his face became of a yellow paleness, and he said, in his heart, "Would to heaven that Rajah Judishter had never thought of this Yug!" Creeshna answered Bheema's signs by others as expressive, signifying that it was wrong to grieve or repent now a difficult affair was actually on his hands; then rising from his seat, he took up a blade of grass, and, in his view, split it in two down the middle: meaning, in this manner you must rend asunder the body of your antagonist. Bheema was overjoyed at this; his strength became suddenly augmented, and he felt that he had got the remedy in his hands. Thus inspired with new vigour, he seized Jarasandha by the foot, and threw him to the ground. If it be demanded by what means Bheema now became so superior in strength to Jarasandha, after they had for so many days been an equal match for each other, the answer is, that Jarasandha perceived his death to be approaching by Creesh-

na's signals; he found that his adversary had comprehended the means of his speedy destruction, and that, in consequence, a weakness had seized all his limbs, as is always the case with men before their death. Bheema was the conqueror, and we must praise the acts of the Creator. Thus, then, it was: Bheema put one of Jarasandha's feet beneath his own foot, and took the other foot in his hand, then, with one prodigious effort, tore him in halves from the base of the chine to the crown of the head, so that one half fell bleeding to the ground, and the other remained quivering under his foot. Creeshna and Arjoon applauded Bheema, and the Devatas hailed him with a shower of flow-

ers from heaven, while men remained astonished spectators of the event. Creeshna, for the purpose of completing the Yug of Judishter, crowned Sehe-deva, the son of Jarasandha, immediately in his father's place, and did all he could to console him. He descanted on the fickleness of fortune and the rapidity of human vicissitudes; observing to him that it was the decree of fate that Jarasandha should thus perish, and that he ought rather to grieve for his own continuance in life than for his father's death, since he too must at some time go the same road. "Now, therefore," said he, "ascend thy father's throne, young prince, and release the many rajahs whom he kept in confinement."

THE LIFE OF CREESHNA.

PART III.

Twenty thousand and eight hundred rajahs of eminence, who had been taken by Jarasandha, as men take beasts of the chase, were now released from confinement. They had long indulged secret, but vain hopes that their children and friends would have come to their aid; but, finding none able to help them, they had at last looked up to Creeshna, whose name and miracles they had heard of while in prison, as their only resource. On obtaining their liberty, they immediately recognised their benefactor, from the description they had heard of his person—viz. the Incarnate, conspicuous with Geda, and Chakra, and Kemel, with a brilliant Koondel in his ear, and valuable chains of pearl around his neck, a yellow robe circling his waist, and a crown of peacock's feathers on his head; and, all squalid as they were and overrun with unseemly hair, they threw themselves at his feet, uttering the most lively expressions of gratitude, and calling him, amongst other titles, Madhoo.* Creeshna expressed himself perfectly satisfied with their repentance from the errors of their former pride before their misfortunes, assuring them that he had more regard for those who turned their minds towards him after wicked conduct, than even for devotees and

penitents who had passed their whole lives in prayer and austerity. He then dismissed them free and happy to their several provinces, and himself proceeded leisurely on to Hastanapoor. Rajah Judishter came out and conducted him with all honour into the city, and Koontee praised him exceedingly for having thus secured the celebration of Judishter's Yug; but Bheema, smiling, told his mother that Creeshna had sat very quietly by him in a corner, while all the hardship of combating Jarasandha had fallen upon himself. Creeshna admitted the fact, but mentioned the hints he had given Bheema for tearing Jarasandha asunder. Judishter, in the mean time, could not contain his satisfaction, which found its way through his eyes in tears; while Creeshna, as the younger of the two, laid his head at the feet of Judishter.

Judishter endeavoured to express his thanks to Creeshna, since now, by the exertions of his friendship and benevolence, he beheld all the wish of his heart accomplished: wherefore, he summoned from every quarter Brahmins learned in the Vedas and skilled in the rites of Yugs; as well as many rajahs from the most distant countries, some brought thither by force of arms and others in the way of friendship, with their sons and suite; and of Brahmins, Khettrees, Vysyas, and Soodras, an innumerable multitude. The

* Madhoo means slayer of Madhoo Ditya. See Mahabbarat, 13 perb. p. 474.—*Halhed.*

vessels for the celebration of the Yug were all of gold. Rajah Judishter, throwing off the clothes from his breast, remained covered with a single piece of cloth, *i. e.* he became Pootree; and, giving into the hands of the Zennardars a string of gold, began the Yug. All mankind were astonished at the profusion of gold and wealth that was displayed, but the wiser few knew that wherever Creeshna was present, there could be no deficiency whatever. Rajah Judishter, with his head bare, and holding in his two hands the sacred grass Cusa, performed the Pooja; then, calling on the name of Narayen, turned towards Creeshna and smiled, expressively intimating that all this was entirely the fruit of his kindness, and that all he did was for him. Judishter addressed the elders of his family, requesting of them to give their advice in a matter of such infinite consequence as this Yug, to whom Pooja should be first addressed. No one had yet spoken to the subject; when Sahadeva, Judishter's youngest brother, rose, and with great modesty and respect, observed, "That this was a question which had been asked by one who well saw and knew the proper answer; that there was no room nor necessity for a question; that the Pooja should certainly be first addressed to Creeshna; that, as well by the institutes of the Vedas as by the decision of all the learned, Pooja to Shree-Creeshna was the same as Pooja to all the Devatas, just as watering the root of a tree affords moisture to the whole plant. That He was the Creator, the Preserver, the Destroyer, all in one, and that, merely on hearing the Shree-Bhagavat, the soul was purified from all its crimes; therefore, when he was present, none else could be worthy. That the earth was in the nature of a body, of which he was the soul; and that, for his own part, he should worship none but him." Creeshna requested Sahadeva not to proceed in this adulatory strain; but the audience all applauded and encouraged him. Rajah Judishter was overjoyed that this proposition had succeeded exactly in conformity to his wishes, washed Creeshna's feet, and threw that water over his own head and eyes; after that, he washed the feet of the eight Nayega and of Oodhoo, and,

in the same manner, cast it on his head; and, arranging before him the finest clothes and precious chains, with all the other apparatus, performed the Pooja, and humbled his head in the dust of Creeshna's foot. After this he performed Pooja to all the Devatas and all the Yadavas. While Judishter was thus performing the Pooja to Shree-Bhagavan, it rained flowers from the sky, and Devatas uttered praises, and men proffered Aservad, for his sake. But Rajah Seesooal, son of Rajah Demhook, burnt with grief and anger, and, with fiery eyes, starting up from his seat, made a long philippic against Creeshna; first inveighing against the Brahmins and others for listening to the proposition of one of the youngest of the assembly; then adding, "that he did not advise the Pooja to be addressed to himself, but to some of the noble persons or learned Reyshees, of whom there were many present infinitely more worthy than the object of their choice: that they did not offer the Ahoot Hown to the fire and the Zennardars, but brought it to this crow (alluding to his black colour): that the person who forsook the Vedas, to choose a different religion for himself, was not to be ranked among their objects of veneration: that they must have heard that the Yadavas were under the Srap (curse) of a holy Reyshee, which denounced they should never wear the diadem; how then could they be addressed with Pooja? That a man who could quit such holy places as Mathura, Gaya, and other Teerthes, to make a settlement on the sea-side, and establish there a seminary of plunder and robbery, from which to despatch banditti to other kingdoms and provinces, could not be allowed to possess any sort of nobility." In these, and other words of a similar malignant purport, did Seesooal vent his rage, while Creeshna, by signs, prevented all the persons present from interrupting him. However, his insolence was no longer to be borne, and most of them got up and retired to one side, as not thinking it decent or worthy of them to hear such abuse of Creeshna, nor choosing to participate in the crime incurred thereby. Bheema and his brothers, rising hastily, seized their arms, and attempted to kill See-

soopal, who, on his side, prepared for the conflict; but Creeshna interfered and prevented a battle, lest it should throw the Yug into confusion, and desired Bheema neither himself to interrupt him nor to suffer others to do so. After Seesoopal had thus a hundred times vilified Creeshna, the latter cut off his head with his Chakra; a flame of fire then issued from Seesoopal's head, which for a time hovering about in the air, at last entered Creeshna's mouth, where it subsided; and his army fled away in the greatest consternation. Rajah Judishter, after the close of the Yug, made great presents to the Brahmins, and from that day became rajah of rajahs. Creeshna staid some months in Hastanapoor, and at length took leave and went to Dwaraka, which Judishter consented to with much reluctance.

Judishter's younger brothers were all very dutiful to their senior, performing whatever he enjoined, whether it were agreeable to them or not, without repining; every thing of difficulty that was undertaken was by Creeshna's directions; the care of less important matters devolved on Bheema. Arjoon had the department of attending to the great men and all the rajahs, in whatever concerned them. Dropeda managed the affairs of provision, by the consent and agreement of her brother. Beder had the arrangement of the assembly, and Kerne the care of the expense. On the day that the Yug was completed, Creeshna, in the fulness of his beneficence, was present in one place with all the Devatas, and Reyshees and Brahmins, and Rajahs, and they carried Rajah Judishter to the banks of the Ganges. Brahmins chaunted the Vedas, and Rajah Judishter bathed, while flowers rained from heaven upon his head. There was an endless variety of music and singing. All men rejoiced, and dressed themselves in their most sumptuous apparel, and perfumed themselves with sandal, and saffron, and sweet waters. The women, who, buried in Harems, were seldom permitted to see the sun, came out on that day to view Rajah Judishter. Even the inhabitants of Soorg were all delighted with the news of that Yug; and so prodigious were the crowds which were collected together in Hastanapoor, on

account of it, that the earth groaned beneath their weight; while all, with one voice, gave glory to Creeshna, for having procured the celebration of so magnificent a festival. The Yadavas were struck with astonishment at beholding the beauty of the inhabitants of Hastanapoor, having before conceived that nothing in the world was equal to Dwaraka. The assembled rajahs were deeply grieved to quit Rajah Judishter, but one necessity or another at length carried them all to their own homes. Every individual of the human race has some desire or other gratified; but Judishter, by the kindness of Creeshna, attained to the completion of all his wishes. Doorjoodhen was fretted to the soul at his celebrity and renown, and was for ever nourishing ill designs against him. Creeshna, to torment Doorjoodhen the more, ordered the eight Nayega to pay all kind of respect and service to Dropeda; and, on her sitting down or rising up, the Devatas became mad with admiration at the tinkling that proceeded from the golden bells that adorned her feet and ancles: while the reflection of every colour of jewels on her polished cheeks, wherever it fell, exhibited a variety of beauty. All these circumstances greatly incensed the jealous mind of Doorjoodhen, but his fury was wrought to the highest pitch by the following incident: The lofty edifice which formed Judishter's council chamber was erected by Maya the Ditya; it consisted entirely of polished crystal, embellished with jewels, so that, from the clearness of the crystal, those parts, which were perfectly dry, appeared full of water; and, where there was really water, in vast crystalline recesses, all appeared dry. Rajah Judishter one day holding a council in this magnificent apartment, Doorjoodhen with his brother came thither; and imagining he was approaching water, though the place was perfectly dry, started back, and extended the golden wand, which he held in his hand, to explore if it were really water before him. Bheema at this instantly burst out into a loud laughter, nor could all Judishter's authority restrain him, so ludicrous was the spectacle. Doorjoodhen was exceedingly ashamed and affronted, and went away from the council in great wrath. All this was Cree-

na's sport; but, as it was his intention to put to death altogether in one place a number of those wicked tyrants, by whose weight the earth was oppressed, he for the present overlooked it, while Doorjoodhen, by his secret destination, grew daily more inveterate in his malicious and treacherous designs.

At the time that Rajah Seesoopal went to Gundenpoor to marry Rokemnee, and when Creeshna stole her away from the midst of all the assembled rajahs, among the number was Rajah Sal, a particular friend of Seesoopal, who swore, that if he did not root out the very name of the Yadavas, he would be no more a Khettree. He too was one of those who, with Seesoopal, pursued Creeshna, and who, on dire experience of Creeshna's might, turned back and fled, glad to escape with his life. But this oath always remained at the bottom of his mind; and, when Creeshna slew Seesoopal, Sal was again exceedingly irritated, and felt the weight of his former oath like a mill-stone round his neck, esteeming life itself no longer tolerable, if he could not revenge his friend's death. But how to effect it was the question. After much consideration, he concluded, it could only be done by the assistance of the Devatas; and as Mahadeva is the chief of them, he began a most rigorous course of mortification, in which, after fasting the whole day, he took no other sustenance in the evening than a handful of earth. This austerity lasted a whole year; and then Mahadeva appeared to him, and bid him name his desire, and it should be gratified. He demanded revenge on his enemies. Roodra promised it, and vanished. After this, Rajah Sal built a city, and fortified the castle of it in the most complete manner, to serve as an asylum in the day of danger; and then, taking with him a great army, went to Dwara-ka. The first effort of his fury was to cut down all the trees and plants in the suburbs; then, forcing the city-gate, and raising a lofty (temporary) structure that commanded the city itself, he began to practise all the arts of sorcery, in which he was an adept. He caused it to rain stones from heaven, he raised tempestuous hurricanes that bore down every thing before them, houses, temples, palaces; and, by these means, he

threw all Dwara-ka into confusion. Predemne, in Creeshna's absence, was governor of the city, and exerted his utmost endeavours to soothe and tranquilize the inhabitants, telling them, that all their troubles would certainly be assuaged by the blessing of Him who had taken on himself a mundane existence, for the purpose of lightening the burthens of the earth. Predemne then mounted his chariot, and after him came Satek, and Charadeshe, and Behane, and others, followed by a very great crowd of warriors. Sal, then, by his magical power, rendered the air so completely dark, that a man could not see his own hand. Predemne, on this, discharged a fire-dart, which instantly dissipated the obscurity. Sal and Predemne then recognized each other; and Predemne, on seeing him, shot an arrow, which felled his standard-bearer to the ground, while the driver met the same fate from another. After that, he struck the horses of the carriage, and wounded his troops, so that rivers of hostile blood began to flow; and Sal, who could not find a moment to return the discharge, with grief and amazement discovered that Creeshna's sons were even more courageous than their father. Sal was now again obliged to have recourse to his magic and incantations instead of the sword, and made himself one moment a dwarf, the next a giant; now visible, now invisible: one moment he was in the sky, another on earth; now raining down water, and now fire. Predemne demolished the force of all his spells and sorcery by his own superior skill in the black art. Sal had a particular friend, named Dereman, whom, at his first effort, Predemne had stretched senseless on the ground with an arrow. When he came to himself, he grasped his battle-axe, and, running up to the Predemne, with a furious blow deprived him of sensation.

Predemne's companions, on his being thrown down senseless, had been cast into utter despair; but, on his recovery, which was instantaneous, new life seemed to have entered their bodies. Predemne, now, with four arrows, slew Sal's four horses; next his driver: he then cut away his standard and canopy, or umbrella, and so terrified his army, that most of them fled and plunged

into the river. The battle lasted twelve days. All the Yadavas applauded Sal; for, no warrior before him had been able to keep on the engagement with them for more than five days, and he had fought twelve. About this period, Creeshna took leave of the Pandoos, and returned to Dwaraka. On the road he discovered that great mischief had been done in Dwaraka, and concluded that Rajah Sal had gone thither. Although he knew that Predemne had learnt the arts of Maya, yet he thought Sal his superior in that science: so he made his charioteer Dareke make all possible expedition, and they quickly arrived at Dwaraka. Sal's troops spied Creeshna's standard, and told their master. When, therefore, Creeshna came nigh, Sal stepped forward, and meeting him, and lifting on high a glittering spear, was on the point of aiming it at Creeshna's driver; but he had not yet launched it, when Creeshna snapped it in his hand with an arrow. Sal, violently enraged, shot an arrow, which broke Creeshna's bow with a crash that resounded to heaven, and he now began to triumph as in certain victory, exclaiming aloud, "O Creeshna! dost thou remember the day when thou didst steal Rokemenee from Rajah Seesopal, my beloved friend, and afterwards how thou didst stain Judishta's Yug with his blood? For these acts I am this day going to take revenge. It is useless for thee to bemoan thy inferiority; stand firm, nor attempt to flee, for there is no road open for retreat." Creeshna rebuked him for his idle boasting, and taking his Geda, aimed it so forcibly at Sal, that he vanished away, and for two hours was utterly invisible. At the expiration of that period, he appeared before Creeshna in the dress of a messenger, having changed his natural form for another, and, with his hair all clotted with dirt, and speaking with the voice of one out of breath, he said, "O Creeshna! Vasudeva, your noble father, sent me hither to acquaint you that he knows you came into the world for the relief of the oppressed and the support of the weak; yet, in spite of this, Rajah Sal has taken that father prisoner, and is carrying him off." Creeshna was wonderfully struck with this event, yet thought that perhaps it

was true. This mistake, indeed, is not reconcilable with Creeshna's omniscience, but it is a mark of his taking on himself the exact state of human life, that such opinions should occupy his mind. In this interval, Rajah Sal, by Maya, formed a counterfeit Vasudeva, and caused him to appear upon that spot, making him utter these words: "O Creeshna, with so godlike a son as you, is it not lamentable that your father should be in so wretched a plight?" Sal, in his own shape, exclaimed, "Now, Creeshna, will I slay your father before your face!" Accordingly, drawing his sword, he instantly cut off the counterfeit Vasudeva's head. Creeshna was dreadfully perplexed, and in doubt whether this was all real or by the force of Maya; and for the space of one Mhooret, his understanding was utterly confused; but, on coming to his reflection, he assured himself that it was all Maya-Vee-Maya. So he pursued Sal, who took to the air, and Creeshna went through the air after him. Creeshna soon overtook Sal, and annihilated all his Maya; from thence he went to his city and castle, which he had also fortified by the power of Maya, and, with a heavy battle-axe, softened all Sal's bones, and broke in pieces his city and castle. In this manner did he strike Sal a hundred times with his battle-axe, and he, at every stroke, broke Creeshna's weapon. Several times Sal fell down with the force of the repeated blows, but again rose up, and returned to the charge. At last, Creeshna struck him so violently with a spear, that, pressing clean through one arm, it fixed in his chest, and even pinned down his other arm; after which, he cut off his head with his crown on, and a shining Koondel in his ear, and threw his city into the river. The Devatas in Deva-Loke made great rejoicing at his fate. Denteebektre, who had been exceedingly affected with his brother Seesopal's death, was now doubly enraged at the slaughter of their dearest friend, Rajah Sal, and made mighty preparations, and levied a strong army against Creeshna.

Creeshna had not yet set out for Dwaraka, when Denteebektre, vowing vengeance, came to the very place where Rajah Sal had been slain. The Yadavas, aware of his prowess, were all ex-

ceedingly alarmed, and Denteebektre, with a battle-axe in his hand, coming close to Creeshna, began to upbraid him with the fate of his brother and his friend, and, collecting all his strength, aimed a blow at him; but Creeshna, at that instant, struck him so violently on the breast with his Geda, that his soul immediately parted from his body; and a flame of fire issuing from his head, ascended into the air, whence it came back and went into Creeshna's mouth, where it was quenched. Denteebektre had a younger brother, named Vederoothe, who also attempted to risk a battle, but Creeshna cut his head off with Sodharsan-Chakra. After the death of these three persons, the Devatas launched out in praise of Creeshna, and the Muni-Eswaras and Reyshees were unbounded in their panegyrics; and all the intelligents were fully convinced that he was Perebrahme-Pooran-Poorash, while those of confined understandings, whose ideas were circumscribed by the mere limits of the senses only, conceived that he had gained a victory, (as any other mortal might have done,) and that there might exist another who would have vanquished him; but, in fact, whatever exists is HE, and all these notions are the fantasies and sport of Maya, or self-delusion.

Soodaman, a poor Brahmin and fellow student with Creeshna under his tutor Sendeepeen, by the instigation of his wife, about this time paid a visit of respect to Creeshna at Dwaraka, having nothing with him for a present except one handful of rice. Creeshna received him most affectionately, and, in his absence, transformed his cottage to a palace, and his wife to a beauty; gave him a large sum in money, and, at his death, rendered him Mooktee (beatified).

One day, Dropeda requested the eight Nayege to give her an account of their several marriages, which they did in their turns, relating their history as in the former chapters, except that of Lekshema, which is not there inserted, and is as follows:—Lekshema informed Dropeda, that she had one day heard Nared give a description of Creeshna to her father, and he had painted him in such lively colours, that, from the same moment, she fell violently in love

with him, and was determined to marry no other. Her father, however, erected a Soombere (a pavilion) for her, and in the middle of the Soombere was placed a butt or target, and on the top of the butt a fish, with this express condition, that whoever should make his arrow hit the fish, by taking aim through a vessel of water, should have her for a wife; and all the rajahs and chiefs, who came to court her, were introduced into the Soombere, and a bow and arrow were put into their hands. Rajah Magende, and Bheema, and Doorjoodhen, and Kerne, and others, exerted their strongest efforts in vain. "Creeshna, the master of all hearts, knew the secret wish of my heart, took his aim through the vase of water, and easily hit the fish. When I put the Mooktee-Mala round Creeshna's neck, all the others burnt with rage; but Creeshna lifted me into his carriage, and Darek drove us away with the utmost rapidity. His rivals followed us in chariots and on elephants, and their fleetest horses; but, on his very first attack, they all faced about and fled. Thence Creeshna, like the sun bursting from Oodachel to perform his western journey, went to Dwaraka, the beauty of which is not now to be described. My father sent a magnificent portion after me, but I do not presume to call myself his wife; I am one of his humble attendants and slaves."—After this, the other 16,000 wives related, one by one, the history of their captivity under Bhoom-Assoor, together with the death of that tyrant by the hand of Creeshna, and added, that, from that time, they were become the lowest of his slaves.

Towards the close of Creeshna's sojourning among mortals, Vasudeva and Devaci, began fully to comprehend the divine character of Creeshna, and acknowledged him for the Creator, Preserver, and Destroyer, of the world; for, before they had been prevented from understanding by the power of Maya. After Creeshna had one day satisfied Vasudeva on this head, he went with Ram to see his mother Devaci, who received them with the tenderest affection, and told them, she had heard how they had raised the two sons of their tutor Sendeepeen to life; that she, too, had at least the pretensions of their tutor with three times the loss; that

she now required of them the six sons which Cansa had slain, and who had left six deep wounds in her heart, which nothing but their presence could heal. Creeshna and Balhadur, smiling, told her, that they would bring back her sons upon one condition, which was, that she should not set her heart too strongly on them, but be satisfied with seeing them once more. Thereupon, in sight of their mother, they went into the earth, and, passing through, came to the nether world. Rajah Bali, hearing of their approach, met them with great ceremony, and accommodated them with all possible attention; and, after every testimony of reverence and respect, requested to know the cause of his being honoured with the visit of the Lord of the three worlds. Creeshna now began an account of former times, and informed him, "that, in the house of Mereechee, had been born of the seed of Brahma six sons; and, a second time, the same six sons were born in the house of Hiranyacasipu. The same were also again born in the house of Kal-Neeme, and in that life inflicted much vexation and infinite troubles on holy men and Devatas, who therefore fixed this curse on them: 'As ye now give so much molestation to us, may your own father be your murderer.' Kal-Neeme was an Avatar of Cansa, and these six sons did Devaci, the sister of Cansa, bring into the world, who have all been slain by Cansa. Devaci is our mother also, and has obtained of me permission once more to behold her children. I have heard that they are in your kingdom, being now released from the curse of the Devatas. These are their names: Semer, Kelie, Bergoon, Chhoodre, Derkheren, Tebeek. Inquire after them, that I may show them to their mother, and that, after a sight of her, they may go to paradise." Rajah Bali instantly dispatched some servants to look for them, and in one hour they were all brought to Creeshna, who, taking them under his arm, and kindly accepting all Rajah Bali had set before them, came up from beneath the earth to the place in Dwaraka where Devaci was sitting, in anxious expectation to behold her children, and presented the six little ones to their mother. The instant she saw her sons the milk began to flow

from her breasts, and, after gratefully thanking Creeshna and Balhadur, she hugged them to her bosom, and kissed their foreheads, and suckled them with milk from the same breast which had once nourished Creeshna. All that she had formerly promised as the condition of seeing them was now overturned, and Creeshna was obliged to desire her to suspend her fondness, and be calm, that they might take their departure for paradise. Devaci acknowledged his kindness in having procured for her a sight which it was not otherwise possible to behold, and submitted. The children having drunk of Devaci's milk, and having Creeshna's hand also passed over their bodies, became immortal, and all appeared in the figure of Creeshna, with a shining Koondel and Mookete. They then mounted on an eagle, resembling Creeshna's; afterwards, falling at his and Ram's feet, and paying Nemeskar to Vasudeva and Devaci also, they set off for paradise, in the sight of all the people. Devaci exclaimed, that, having now seen her dead sons revived, and on the way to paradise, she was well assured that she also herself should speedily go thither.

Distinctly to mark the equal regard with which the Deity observes all his devout worshippers of every rank and class, Creeshna one morning set out with a great suite of Devatas for TIRHUT, for the express purpose of exhibiting the marks of his divine favour to Bhoolamen, the rajah of that place, and also to one Mhooret-Deva, a poor Brahmin inhabitant of that city, both of whom were his most zealous devotees. When he arrived there, knowing that their faith and religious merits were upon par, although their station and circumstances were widely different, he was solicitous not to appear to give the one a preference above the other, nor let either feel himself slighted. He, therefore, made a double representation of himself, both Avatars exactly similar, so that the rajah, who received him with all the pomp and splendour of royalty, and with magnificent presents of exquisite clothes, chains, and strings of pearls. &c., conceived himself the most favoured of mortals, in having the divine personage under his own roof; while the humble Brahmin, no less overjoyed, was laying his unaffected offerings of the choicest

fruits and strings of sweet flowers before the very same Creeshna at the same moment in his own house. Creeshna, at the earnest instances of the rajah, stayed some time with him in his magnificent palace to fortify his devotion, and all the inhabitants of Tirhut were eased of their doubts and perplexities by his presence; at the same time he was daily present in the lowly cottage of Mhooret-Deva, receiving grateful prayers and thanksgivings, with the greatest condescension and benevolence. After some time thus employed, Creeshna returned to Dwaraka, and the Brahmin accompanied him a considerable way on the journey.

Terek-Assoor one day demanded of Nared, which of the three Devas, Brahma, Vishnu, and Mahadeva, was to be propitiated with the least worship? Nared answered, Mahadeva; who presently grants whatever is desired by those who worship him with their whole heart. Accordingly, Terek-Assoor became a most zealous worshipper of Mahadeva, to obtain his own particular purposes. But Mahadeva showed him no signs of encouragement; the Ditya, however, redoubled his austerities in such a manner, that, in the space of seven days, he cut off all the flesh from his own body with a knife, and burnt it in the fire; and, after those seven days, was preparing to cut off his own head also, as a propitiatory sacrifice. Mahadeva at length appeared to him, and took hold of his hand, by which his flesh was instantly restored to its former state, and told him, that, whatever was his wish, it should be granted. At the same time he demanded why he had proceeded to such austerities, declaring, that, whoever in sincerity sacrificed to him, even with water, obtained the object of his desires. Terek-Assoor demanded, "that on whose head soever he should lay his hand, that person might be reduced instantly to ashes." On hearing this extraordinary request, (which of course was immediately granted,) fear came on the world, and Mahadeva himself, also recollecting the story of the black snake, who prepared to bite his benefactor on the very day he had fed him with milk, and concluding the Ditya had a mind to make experiment of his power, by laying his hand on Mahadeva's own head, fled

hastily away. Terek-Assoor following him at full speed, Mahadeva made the circuit of the seven stages of the earth and the seven stages of heaven, but no one was able to protect him from his pursuer, so he urged his flight back again to Paradise. There Narayen, taking pity on his situation, came immediately forth to comfort him, and assuming, by the force of his Maya, the figure of a beautiful woman, met the exasperated Ditya, and, with a delicate voice, asked what was the reason of his running so fast? adding, that if he had placed any confidence in Mahadeva's promises, he was woefully deceived; for that, ever since the day when that deity had interrupted Dekshe's Yug, Dekshe had uttered a curse against him, and from that time Mahadeva's words never produced any effect. That he had only to put his hand on his own head, and he might depend on finding Mahadeva's promise to be utterly false. On hearing the soft speeches of this enchanter of the world and its inhabitants, Terek-Assoor put his hand on his own head, and was instantly reduced to ashes by the touch. Jeye! Jeye! resounded through Paradise on his death, and it rained flowers from heaven, since the evil which he destined in his heart for another fell upon himself. Mahadeva, overjoyed at his escape, came out from his lurking-place, and retired to his palace at Kylass.

A similar question was once proposed by the Reyshees and Muni-Eswaras, as they were at a certain time performing a Yug near the river Saraswatty. These holy men demanded of Bhreegoo, whether Brahma, Vishnu, or Mahadeva, were most worthy to be worshipped, that they and all the people might address their devotions accordingly? Bhreegoo said, he would first try all the three, and then inform them. In consequence, he went first to Brahma, and addressed him with the salutations proper from a son to his father,* to see what kind of temper and patience he possessed. Brahma at first grew angry, and accused him of want of ceremony, but was soon appeased; and his son perceived he was like fire and water, alternately hot and cold. Bhreegoo, in the second place,

* Bhreegoo was one of the sons of Brahma, and the promulgator of the Vedas.

went to Mahadeva's abode: Mahadeva rose up, and was going to embrace him, but Bhreegoo would not let him approach, and made use of very disrespectful language. Mahadeva drew himself up in wrath, and, snatching up his trident, rushed forward with intent to kill him; but Parvati interfered, and falling at her husband's feet, pacified his anger. Bhreegoo hastily retreating thence, went to the place called Vaicontha, the lord of which is Vishnu. Him he found sleeping on the lap of the universe, or Leckschmeen. Bhreegoo, on seeing him, struck him forcibly with his foot on the breast. Vishnu started up, and taking hold of the foot, said, "This breast of mine is extremely hard, and your foot very tender; undoubtedly it must be much hurt." With these and other kind words, mollifying his wrath, he entreated Bhreegoo to stay a little time, and honour his abode with his presence, adding, that he was sorry he had been taken unawares from being ignorant of his approach, entreated his pardon, and hoped his foot would not be injured by so violent a blow. Bhreegoo, weeping for joy at this kind reception, went away, exclaiming, "This surely is the true Lord of the three worlds!" He now returned to the Reyshees, and told them, "Vishnu, for certain, was the deity most benignant and worthy of adoration; that he was the Omnipotent, and that, whosoever with heart and soul should address his vows to him, would obtain all he desired." This same Vishnu is Creeshna; the same who exhibited to Arjoon his own exalted might on the following occasion.

A Brahmin of Dwaraka, who had lost eight sons in their youth, was so transported with grief, that he went one day into the assembly where Creeshna, Arjoon, and the other Yadavas were sitting, and, without the least ceremony, boldly accused their crimes as the cause that the children of Brahmins died so immaturally. Creeshna said nothing; but Arjoon exclaimed with a loud voice, "O, Brahmin! is there none here skilful at the bow? That rajah is not a true Khettree, in whose city a Brahmin should have such cause of mourning. What is past, indeed, cannot be recalled; but I myself will guard your children in future. In my time no such event shall take place, and I will throw my-

self into the fire if I cannot prevent it." The Brahmin told Arjoon, that he talked very presumptuously, since he certainly was not so able a bowman as Balhadur, Creeshna, Predemne, and others, who had not hitherto succeeded. Arjoon replied, that neither Creeshna, nor Predemne, nor Aneroodhe, nor any other Khettree, could prevail against his own famous bow Gandeeva; that he had compelled Mahadeva himself to acknowledge his superior skill in shooting, and should have no difficulty whatever in opposing Yama (the king of Hades). The Brahmin on this returned home, and, when his wife was again in labour, failed not to inform Arjoon, who, bathing himself, and calling upon the name of Bhagavan, and taking up his bow Gandeeva, so completely nailed up the Brahmin's door with arrows, that, on all the six sides, there remained not a single opening where even the air could enter; and there he stood watching with his bow and arrows ready in his hand, but could see nothing. On the former occasions the child came out (of his mother's womb) when dead, but now, even the dead child was vanished through the air. The father wept and mourned, and, going to Creeshna, abused Arjoon in the most unqualified terms for his idle boasting; and Arjoon was so much ashamed, that he said he would go and fetch the Brahmin's son away from Yama himself. But though he went thither, and also to Eendee-Poore, and other Poorees, he could get no tidings whatsoever of the child; so, coming back to the earth, after a fruitless search in extreme affliction, he collected a heap of faggots, and, setting them on fire, was going to cast himself into the flames. Creeshna, seeing this, took him by the hand, and said he had news of the Brahmin's son, and that they must go together and fetch him from a place whither neither his own hand nor Arjoon's could reach. So they mounted a carriage together, and went towards the west, and, passing all the seven climates and all the stages of the universe, came to that profound and palpable darkness where there is no admission of the sun, or the moon, or fire. As they had now no other means of proceeding, Soodharsan-Chakra was ordered to go forward, that the horses might get on by means of its light.

When Arjoon beheld that light, which is the light of God, he could not turn his face towards it; but, covering his eyes, to preserve them from the dazzling glare, remained in deep and awful reflection. When the resplendent brightness of that light overcame them, they entered an expanse of water, where a cold wind reigned. Within that, they observed a splendid palace and throne, whereon sate Seshanaga, the snake, who had a thousand heads, and who seemed in magnitude to resemble Kyalass, while his thousand eyes shot terrific flames. There they beheld the Being indescribable, who is pure and all-sufficient. His countenance was like the flower of the lotos, and he wore a yellow robe on his body, and golden ear-rings, and a profusion of jewels; a string of the finest pearls adorned his neck, and the Kowsteke-Men blazed on the middle of his breast, a figure beautiful in its proportions, and resplendent with Shanka, and Chakra, and Geda, and Padma. Creeshna and Arjoon, perceiving him to be the true object of worship, stood with their hands joined before them in adoration. That sublime Being, which was purity itself, spoke these words, "It was I, who, taking on myself the form of Yama, bore away the Brahmin's son, because I had an earnest desire to see you. You have done what was your function to do, and have released the earth overlaid with her heavy weight. Your incarnation was for the purpose of illuminating the darkness of the world: both of you are Avatars of Narayen, and have well performed your appointed functions." On beholding these wonders, Arjoon totally forgot every thing that had passed in his mind, and now fully comprehended that Creeshna was Lord of heaven and earth, and that all that he saw was his form and his light. They then took the Brahmin's son away with them, and came back. Arjoon, astonished and amazed, totally laid aside his former presumption, and felt both Creeshna's might and his own weakness. The Brahmin, in great joy, received back his son, praising them for the miracles they had wrought, and the toils they had undergone.

One day, in Dwaraka, which is a second Vaicontha, Creeshna was enjoying himself with his relations, and sons, and

grandchildren, and his 16,000 wives, and all his wealth: his elephants, his horses, his carriages out of number, were arranged in order. In the midst of his golden castle extended his apartments on all the four sides. His gardens were of golden earth, wherein were trees of paradise full of variegated fruits. Peacocks, and cocelas (Indian nightingales), and other birds, were sporting therein. Creeshna on that day was surrounded with his 16,000 wives, as lightning with a cloud, and they gathered innumerable flowers as offerings to Creeshna, like the Devatas presenting flowers to Eendra; and, in all the licence of joy, they and Creeshna were sporting together, and throwing the flowers at each other. In the garden was a river, whose banks were all gold and jewels, the water of which, from the reflection of rubies, appeared red, though perfectly white; it was the water of life; and thousands of lotoses floated on its surface, among which innumerable bees were humming and seeking their food. In this river they bathed and played, Creeshna always in the midst of them. At length, in the very height of all their revels and enjoyments, he suddenly disappeared!!! His principal wives, which were the eight Nayega, remained for some time in profound astonishment: then they all burst out into the most passionate exclamations, crying, "Whither is he gone?" One demanded of the birds if they had seen him, wondering they could sing till he returned.—Another asked of the four-footed beasts why they made such loud moanings, as if Creeshna had left and deceived them too.—One addressed the sea, "Thou ocean! who art night and day roaring, hath not Creeshna taken thy fourteen Reten, or precious things, also, as well as our hearts, and is it not therefore thou grievest?"—Another addressed the moon, "O thou Lord of the stars! why dost not thou draw on the world the veil of darkness?"

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NO. XI.—THE LIFE OF CREESHNA.—(*Concluded.*)

Art thou not affected by his absence? at which every one must be heartless, like us wretched creatures, who know not what is our fault to be thus forgotten and forsaken.—Another spake to the passing clouds, "Ye, too, are impressed with the colour and figure of Creeshna, and, as he has taken his departure, so ye also are ever on the wing; and ye, like us mourning for his absence, overspread every quarter with gloom."—Another asked the cocela why he had lost his fine notes? "Is your mate also fled?"

Mr. Hallied's copy of the Mahabbarat was imperfect, and ended abruptly; but he has added in the manuscript these words: "Few events of any importance occur in the history of Creeshna between this period and that of going to Hastanapoor to assist the Pandoos, just before the breaking out of the war of the Mahabbarat, which ended in the destruction of the Kooroos."

*The fate of the Yadavas, and death of
Creeshna, from the Mahabbarat.*

After the completion of the war of the Mahabbarat, and the victory over Doorjoodhen, Judishter remained in triumph and profound peace with his brothers thirty-six years. After that period commenced their calamities and bad omens of every kind. Great storms of wind, accompanied with hail and stones, fell upon the city. Those animals whom it is reckoned fortunate to meet on the right side, met them on the left, and the contrary. The sky rained fire, and ashes, and half-burnt coals; and, sometimes, without any wind, such a dust

was raised, that the sun was hidden at mid-day; while, at other times, his disk appeared without any light, and figures of men, without heads, appeared on all sides of the sun, or there was a black halo encircling it. The Pandoos, and indeed all human beings, were astonished and alarmed at these prodigies, and expected some most extraordinary and dreadful event to follow. In the midst of these horrors, on a certain day, as the Pandoos and nobles were all sitting together, arrived a person from Dwaraka, who brought news that the Yadavas had quarrelled among themselves, and had all cut each other to pieces. Rajah Judishter immediately, in the utmost anxiety and apprehension, sent off a messenger to learn the truth of these melancholy tidings.

Rajah Jenemejeye here requested of Vyshempayen to give him an account of this calamity that had befallen the Yadavas, which he accordingly commenced as follows:

Viswamitra, Dervasa, and Nared, three most perfect Reyshees, were sitting one day together, when Sarane, son of Vasudeva, with Sanete, one of Creeshna's sons, and a multitude of other young persons, all extremely merry, came to the place where they were; and dressing up Sateebe in women's clothes, brought him to the Reyshees; and, telling them it was the wife of Beber-Jaroon, begged to know (as they were exceedingly wise and prescient) what she was likely to bring forth. The Reyshees answered, that they very well knew what person it was thus disguised, and that he should bring forth an iron club, which would be the death of the whole family of the Yadavas. That for

their contemptuous insolence to the poor, and their general pride and arrogance, no one should escape the effects of the iron club out of the whole tribe of the Yadavas, except Creeshna and Balhadur. That Balhadur should quit his present body, and go away into the river, and that Creeshna's time was come to forsake this world. After having said this, these Reyshees took up the skins of Cheeteks on which they sat, and, throwing them over their shoulders, hasted away out of Dwaraka, and went to Rajah Judishter at Hastanapoor. The news of all this was presently spread over the whole city, and caused a general consternation. The next day Sateebe brought forth an iron Desthavenee or club, such as those of wood which are used by athletics in their exercise, with a view to increase their strength. Ogur Sein, who had heard the whole affair, ordered his smiths to grind and pulverise this club, so that a morsel of it should not remain; which they did, and strewed it, when thus ground to dust, by the river side: and it was all thus reduced to impalpable powder, except a piece less than the palm of one's hand. From the dust thrown away by the river side sprung up a great quantity of reeds, and, after the order for grinding away this club, another order was issued, strictly forbidding all the Yadavas to drink wine in future, on pain of death. From that time they left off wine out of fear, and did not even venture to name it. After this, Death appeared in Dwaraka in a human shape, the colour of his skin being black and yellow, his head close shorn, and all his limbs distorted. He placed himself at men's doors; so that all those who saw him shuddered with apprehension, and became even as dead men from mere affright. Every person, to whose door he came shot an arrow at him; and the moment the arrow quitted the bow-string, they saw the spectre no more, nor knew which way he was gone. At the same time adverse winds blew so violently, that all the trees were thrown down; and the tempest was so fierce, that men and brutes were carried away by it. Besides this, innumerable quantities of mice swarmed in every house, so that the moment any thing was set down, if it were not closely watched, the mice carried it

away. Swarms upon swarms of these vermin ran about the market-places; and men's doors being entirely torn away by the dreadful winds, the mice came and gnawed off all their hair and beards while they slept. Nightingales and shareks lost their own notes, and squeaked like mice or hooted like owls, and never left off moaning day or night. Multitudes of owls, also, entered all the houses by night; or, sitting on the roofs, continued hooting and screeching till the morning. In that dreadful period, cows brought forth ass-colts; mares, the foals of camels; bitches, kittens; and weasels, mice. The Yadavas, too, became addicted to all sorts of wickedness and depravity, and were perpetually abusing and reviling the poor and the good; and left off paying all kinds of respect to their spiritual guides and men of science, while the order of nature was reversed, and women got the better of men. Fire gave no light; the flames burnt dusky and livid; and, at the time of sun-rise and sun-set, there appeared near the sun thousands of human figures in the air, with weapons in their hands, skirmishing together, and these appearances were visible to every body. The Yogeas and the Reyshees, and the devotees, and all the religious, whatever skin they spread upon the ground to sit on, after a few minutes, found in the place of it nothing but worms. The moon was eclipsed on its twelfth day, and the sun on the twenty-seventh of the moon. This same prodigy had happened there once before, at the time of the war of the Mahabbarat. Creeshna, when he saw this miracle, said, "It is now thirty-six years since this same portentous sign was seen in the war of the Mahabbarat, and at that time did Kandharce utter her curse against us; the very same ill omens then appeared at the extinction of all the Kooros; and, as they portended the death of all the Kooros at that time, so they now forebode the death of all the Yadavas."

One night Creeshna ordered the heralds to proclaim, that, on the next day, all men should go to the banks of the river in pilgrimage to a famous place of worship and bathing; and that same night there suddenly appeared in Dwaraka a woman of the very blackest complexion; she was also

with which he struck Veere, and killed him. A spectator of this ran immediately and brought Creeshna news of his death; and Creeshna then, rousing Balhadur, said to him, "I am afraid that some invader will desolate the town. I request of you to stay here while I go thither, and I will return the instant I have informed myself." Then Creeshna went directly towards Dwaraka. On arriving there, he hastened to his father Vasudeva, and, after salutation, acquainted him with the utter annihilation of the whole of the males of the Yadava family. Vasudeva immediately began to weep bitterly; but Creeshna told him, that, notwithstanding this most dreadful of all calamities, the present was not a time for weeping, but that he must exert himself for the protection of the women till Arjoon's arrival, for whom he had already dispatched Dareke with all expedition; that he himself must now reluctantly take leave to return to his brother Balhadur, whom he had left sitting disconsolate under a peal-tree, and anxiously waiting his return; that he had formerly seen all the Kooros slain, but that now all the Yadavas, his own relations, had experienced the same fate: and that, being without sons and relations of every kind, he would never more come back into that city, but had made an agreement with Balhadur that they should retire together into the desert to pass their lives in prayer. Having said this, he respectfully kissed Vasudeva's feet. At the same time his wives and women began to weep and bewail their fate in the most heart-rending plaints. Creeshna told them not to be so long in their lamentations, nor to give way to excessive grief, since there was no remedy for the decrees of fate; that Arjoon would arrive there the ensuing day, and dispel their sorrows. Creeshna having said this, and again taken a most affectionate leave of his father and the rest, departed from the city, and came to the place where he had left Balhadur, whom he had found sitting in the very same posture. Creeshna then beheld a snake of an enormous magnitude, and exceedingly white, issue from his mouth. When the snake was entirely come forth, all at once it assumed a thousand heads, and went towards the river, while

the carcase of Balhadur remained without life under the shade of the same tree as before, while the snake gradually approached the river's side. Creeshna then saw that the river appeared in the figure of a Bralumin, advancing respectfully forward to meet the snake, and said to it, "Approach, and be welcome." The snakes that were beneath the earth, such as Vasooke and the rest, [a long catalogue of them follows,] and Varoona, who is the spirit of water, all came to meet that snake, and all devoutly worshipped him. That mighty snake moved on majestically in this manner till he entered the river, and, going into the middle of the stream, plunged into it, and was seen no more. When Creeshna saw that Balhadur's spirit had finally departed, he became exceedingly sorrowful. Near where he stood there was a jungle, or brake, into which he entered, and, leaning his head on his knees, sat absorbed in the deepest melancholy. He reflected within himself, that all the effect of Kandharee's curse had now fully taken place on the Yadavas, and he now called to his remembrance these prophetic words which Doorvasa had once uttered to him: "O Creeshna! take care of the sole of thy foot; for, if any evil come upon thee, it will happen in that place:" (as is related in the 13th perble of the Mahabbarat.) Creeshna then said to himself, "Since all the Kooros and the whole of the Yadavas are now dead and perished, it is time also for me to quit the world." Then, leaning to one side, and placing his feet over his thighs, he summoned up the whole force of his mental and corporeal powers, while his hovering spirit stood ready to depart. At that time there came thither a hunter with his bow and arrow in his hand; and, seeing from a distance Creeshna's foot, which he had laid over his thigh, and which was partly obscured among the trees, he suspected it to be some animal sitting there. Applying, therefore, to his bow and arrow, the point of which was formed from the very iron of that club which had issued from Sateebe's belly, he took aim, and struck Creeshna in the sole of his foot. Then, thinking he had secured the animal, he ran up to seize it, when, to his astonishment, he beheld Creeshna there with four hands,

and drest in yellow habiliments. When the hunter saw that the wounded object was Creeshna, he advanced, and, falling at his feet, said, "Alas, O Creeshna! I have, by the most fatal of mistakes, struck you with this arrow. Seeing your foot at a distance, I did not properly discern my object, but thought it to be an animal: O pardon my involuntary crime!" Creeshna comforted him to the utmost of his power, saying, "It was no fault of thine. Depart, therefore, in peace." The hunter then humbly kissed his foot, and went sorrowing away. The piece of iron which had stricken Creeshna was, as before observed, the remains of that very club which had been ground away by order of Ogur Sein, and of which the small bit that was left had been cast into the river, where a fish had swallowed it; and that fish, being caught, had been sold to this hunter, who, finding a morsel of iron in its belly, formed it into the head of an arrow, with which same arrow he wounded Creeshna. After the hunter was gone, so great a light proceeded from Creeshna, that it enveloped the whole compass of the earth, and illuminated all the expanse of heaven. At that instant, an innumerable tribe of Devatas and other celestial beings, of all ranks and denominations, came to meet Creeshna; and he, luminous as on that night he was born in the house of Vasudeva, by that same light pursued his journey between heaven and earth to the bright Vaicontha, or paradise, whence he had descended. All this assemblage of beings, who had come to meet Creeshna, exerted the utmost of their power to laud and glorify him. Creeshna soon arrived at the abode of Eendra, who was overjoyed to behold him, and accompanied him as far as the extent of Eendra-Loke reached, and offered him all manner of ceremonious observances. When Creeshna had passed the limits of Eendra's territory, Eendra said to him, "I have no power to proceed any farther, nor is there any admission for me beyond this limit." So Creeshna kindly dismissed him, and went forward alone.

In the meantime Dareke, who had been sent to summon Arjoon, immediately on his arrival at Hastanapoor, waited upon Rajah Judishter, who rejoiced exceedingly to see him; but,

when he heard the fatal news of the death of all the Yadavas, he fell down senseless through the distracting violence of his grief. When he came to himself, Dareke related to him all the particulars of this sad catastrophe, at which he and his brothers remained more dead than alive. Arjoon, however, instantly hurried away to visit Vasudeva, and see in what state Creeshna himself might be. So he mounted the carriage, and came with all possible speed to Dwaraka. He beheld the city in the state of a woman whose husband is recently dead; and, finding neither Creeshna nor Balhadur, nor any other of his friends there, the whole place appeared in his eyes as if involved in a cloud of impenetrable darkness, nor could he refrain from bursting into tears. The 16,000 wives of Creeshna, the moment they set their eyes on Arjoon, burst also into a flood of tears, and all at once began the most bitter lamentations; and, in truth, the whole city was so rent with uproar and distraction, that it surpasses description. Arjoon, on seeing them thus left without husband, children, father, brother, or friend of any sort, was so affected with their situation, that all his understanding, judgment, and courage, forsook him; and, for a time, he was utterly unable to come to any resolution. After a long pause, recovering his bewildered intellects, he anxiously enquired where Vasudeva was, and went to see him. Here the scene of grief and misery was renewed; and, after a mutual intercourse of lamentation, in which Vasudeva told him he had neither eaten nor drunk since Creeshna had left him, Arjoon, taking Dareke with him, went to Creeshna's palaces, and, summoning together such of his people that were left, told them, that, in seven days from that time, the sea would rise in mountain-billows, and entirely submerge the city; that, therefore, they must, before that time, exert themselves, get every carriage, elephant, and horse, in the place ready, and carry away the women and all the best part of the treasure towards Eendraput, *i. e.* Dheli; that they must, moreover, take with them Vejre, son of Anaroodhe, and Creeshna's great grand-son, and seat him in the government of Dheli. He assured them there was not a mo-

dressed in black attire, and was hideous, with yellow teeth. She entered every house grinning horribly a ghastly smile, and all who saw her were stricken with dread. The moment any person attempted to catch her, she vanished, and immediately appeared in some other house; so that on one and the same night she was seen in almost every house at Dwaraka; and, in places where they were celebrating Yugs, such heart-appalling terror arose, that no one could possibly go thither. Demons also came, and carried away the ornaments of the women and the arms of the men, and no one could impede them, or recover the things they seized. In the midst of this dreadful tumult and distraction, the heart of Creeshna, taking its direction through the air, ascended to heaven, so that all men saw it, and, with a confused clamour, exclaimed aloud, "Lo! Creeshna's heart ascends its native skies!" Every one followed it with their eyes till distance rendered it completely invisible. Dareke, too, the driver, having put the horses to the carriage, they took fright, and wildly ran away with the carriage into the pathless regions of the air, far beyond the ken of mortals. The figure on the standard of Balhadur being a falcon, and on that of Creeshna being Garoori, the eagle, left the standards of themselves, and went up to heaven. Apsaras hovered about in the air, and were continually wailing, and crying out, "Arise ye, and flee!" and this voice resounded through all the houses. On the next day, being that whereon Creeshna had ordered an universal visitation to a certain holy Teerthe on the bank of the river, the people sent down thither great quantities of provision and wine, and took with them all their finest dresses and richest ornaments: immense was the multitude that flocked thither of men, women, and children, some in carriages, some on horseback and elephants, and other means of conveyance. The retailers carried down their shops thither, and the people all got such accommodation as they could, either in tents or under the trees. When every body was gone to the Teerthe, one Oodhoo, a Yadava, who, for learning, piety, and exalted merit of every kind, had no equal, took leave of Creeshna, and went

away towards the northern countries. This man, from the brightness of his devotion, had acquired so luminous an appearance, that wherever he went, the road for a long way shone, as if with fire. When the people had all taken their places, Creeshna ordered that they should first prepare a variety of victuals and drink for the Brahmins; and while they were doing so, a drunken Yadava, who happened to have a pitcher of wine in his hand, spilt some of its contents on the provision, and contaminated the whole, so that the Brahmins would not touch a morsel of it; and Creeshna commanded the whole to be thrown to the monkeys. As this was a great festival, all the first musicians, dancers, &c., began their amusements; and men, having been so long deprived of wine, were now eager to indulge in it even to satiety, while Creeshna arranged in order the various guests. All the elders and nobles of the family, of whom Ogur Sein was the first in age, and Balhadur, Creeshna's elder brother, and Beber, and Satyekee, and Keret-Brema, and the sons of Creeshna, Prendemne, Neset, &c., were all present in that assemblage, and every one of the Yadavas of note to a man.

When they were all duly seated, Balhadur, who was impatient for liquor, called to the attendants to bring some pitchers of wine, and set them before each person, while the master of the ceremonies took especial care to place those persons together who were known to be particularly intimate, that they might quaff the sparkling beverage with more hilarity. Balhadur and Keret-Brema were thus in one party; Prendemne and Satyekee in another; Veere, or Beber, and Creeshna's younger brothers in another. Satyekee soon became extremely intoxicated, and looking towards Keret-Brema, cried out, "See that Khettree, my friends, who vaunts so much of his manhood: he, with the concurrence of Aswesthame, went by night to attack a parcel of inoffensive young people, and killed all the poor innocents most unjustly! Yet he boasts of his courage." Prendemne exclaimed, "Bravo!" Keret-Brema, who was also very much intoxicated, said, "Do you, Satyekee, upbraid me? you, whose merciless sword has perpetrated so many murders?" Creeshna now hinted to Sat-

yekee to reproach Keret-Brema for killing Sete-Rajeete, and carrying away his jewel. [Here the story of Sete-Rajeete is related, as in a former page,* see 56 Adhyhaye.] When Setebame, Creeshna's wife, heard her father's name mentioned, she began to weep exceedingly, and asked Creeshna how he could suffer those men to live who had killed her father? but Creeshna gave her no answer. Satyekee then rose up, and desired her not to grieve, assuring her that he would revenge her father's blood on that villain who was the very assassin that, in confederacy with Aswesthame, basely murdered the sons of Dropeda, and Sookemeda, and Drestedoomne, and so many thousand others: but that his life should instantly terminate in expiation of all those bloody deeds. Then, drawing his cimeter, he flew towards Keret-Brema, who also got up to draw his sword, when Satyekee, at the first blow, cut off his head. The relations of each party immediately engaged in furious contest, and several were presently killed on both sides. Creeshna, seeing the violence of the fray, rose up, endeavouring to appease them; but all his exclamations and endeavours were fruitless. Keret-Brema's relations lanced upon Satyekee; and Predemne, having spoken to Creeshna, went to keep the assailants from him; but two of the opposite party having drawn their swords, slew both Predemne and Satyekee before Creeshna's face. Creeshna was now greatly enraged, and, having no other weapon by him, tore up some of those reeds which grew by the river's side, and struck with them those who had slain Predemne and Satyekee. Wherever those fatal reeds fell, they caused certain death; and as they now began to attack Creeshna himself, he presently dispatched all his assailants with the same weapon. Others, also, ran and took some of the same reeds; and began to fight with them, and their effect, whomsoever they touched, was like the arrow of death; for, instant destruction ensued. The father here slew his son, and the son the father; brother killed brother, and relations perished

by the hand of each other, all fighting with these reeds; for, in truth, by the curse of those three Reyshees, they were all reduced to such a desperate situation, that they knew not what they did, but continued smiting and striking, till in the end every one of Creeshna's sons and all their posterity were slain on that calamitous spot. Creeshna there beheld, among others of the dead, his sons Predemne, and Sanete, and Jaredvesoo; and Aneroodhee, the son of Predemne; and Kephe, or Goped, his own brother; and all his other relations. While he was absorbed in grief at this event, Dareke, his driver, came and told him, that, before this quarrel commenced, his elder brother Balhadur had risen from the assembly, and had gone no one knew whither; and it was much to be apprehended that some fatal accident had befallen him also. Creeshna immediately ordered his carriage to be got ready, that he might go and seek his brother. Then himself and Veere, the Yadava, mounted the chariot, and Dareke drove them.

They had proceeded but a little way, when they discovered Balhadur sitting under the shade of a pepul (or pepper) tree, with his eyes closed, and apparently immersed in deep thought. Creeshna and Veere, the Yadava, approached very gently, and sat down beside him. But Balhadur was so much absorbed in his reflections, that he did not in the least perceive any person's approach. Creeshna now said to Dareke, "You see what a horrible calamity has happened to all our people! Go quickly to Rajah Judishter, acquaint him with the sad catastrophe, and desire him to send Arjoon hither immediately." Dareke, mounting the carriage, drove with all speed towards Hastanapoor. After he was gone, Creeshna said to Veere, "You are aware of the miserable fate of these men; go now to Dwaraka, and look after my wives and houses, lest any thieves or villains, knowing that the town is empty, should come thither in hopes of plunder, offer violence to the women, and ransack the city. My father Vasudeva is also in the town, pay also the utmost attention to his safety." So Veere hastily returned towards the city; but, in his way, met with a hunter quite intoxicated, who had in his hands some of those fatal reeds,

* This story, which was tedious and uninteresting, and had no connection with the history in point of event, I purposely omitted. M.

superstitious rites are detailed at great length by Kæmpfer. Among other circumstances he relates, that in the reign of the eleventh emperor from Syn Mu, Budo came over from the Indies into Japan, and brought with him, upon a white horse, his religion and doctrine. Kæmpfer here evidently confounds the two last Avatars, the tenth being a warrior with a winged white horse. Chronology marks him for the undoubted Fot of China, the name being thus softened down by a race who have neither a B nor D in their alphabet. He was the Wod, or original Oden of the Scandinavians, proved to have been so by the rock-worship in use among them and their Druid-descendants in Europe. For the same reason he is known to be the elder Thoth and Hermes of Egypt, pyramids, and certain pillars, called Herma, being sacred to that deity. He is also known to be the Taut, or Mercury, of Phœnicia, as well by the same species of rude worship and symbols, (the Mercurial heaps), as by the very curious circumstance, often before alluded to in this work and the Indian Antiquities, that the fourth day of the week, (our Wednesday, a corruption of Woden's day), which is assigned to Buddha in India, called Bhlood-War, is the Dies Mercurii of the west. There is, also, some reason to suppose, from the following passage of Sir William Jones, that the rites of his religion were not wholly unknown among the Arabians, whose principal divinity was represented under the form of a cubical black stone. He observes, that "the powers of God represented as female deities, the adoration of stones, and the name of the idol Wudd, induce us strongly to suspect, that some of the Hindoo superstitions had found their way into Arabia; and, though we have no trace in Arabian history of such a conqueror or legislator as the great Sesac, who is said to have raised pillars in Yemen as well as at the mouth of the Ganges, yet, since we know that Sacya is a title of Buddha, whom I suppose to be Woden, and since the age of Sesac perfectly agrees with that of Sacya, we may form a plausible conjecture that they were in fact the same person who travelled eastward from Ethiopia, either as a warrior or as a lawgiver, about a thousand years before Christ, and whose

rites we now see extend as far as the country of Nifon, or, as the Chinese call it, Japuen, both words signifying the rising sun.

We cannot more properly commence the native accounts concerning this Avatar of Buddha, than by inserting the subsequent extract relating to him, from the Asiatic Researches. It is part of a translation, by Sir John Shore, of an inscription on a silver plate, found in a cave near Islamabad. The reader is already too well acquainted with the romantic style in which all the Indian legends are written, to need any apology for our inserting it verbatim. From the presence and services of so many deities of superior order at his birth, and on other occasions, a just idea of the importance of his character may be formed, and fully establishes his title to the distinguished rank of an Avatar.

"God sent into the world Buddha-Avatar to instruct and direct the steps of angels and of men, of whose birth and origin the following is a relation:—When Buddha-Avatar descended from the region of souls, in the month of Magh, and entered the body of Mahamaya, the wife of Sootah Dannah, rajah of Cailas, her womb suddenly assumed the appearance of clear transparent chrystal, in which Buddha appeared, beautiful as a flower, kneeling and reclining on his hands. After ten months and ten days of her pregnancy had elapsed, Mahamaya solicited permission from her husband, the rajah, to visit her father, in conformity to which the roads were directed to be repaired and made clear for her journey; fruit-trees were planted, water-vessels placed on the road-side, and great illuminations prepared for the occasion. Mahamaya then commenced her journey, and arrived at a garden adjoining to the road, where inclination led her to walk and gather flowers. At this time, being suddenly attacked with the pains of child-birth, she laid hold on the trees for support, which declined their boughs at the instant, for the purpose of concealing her person while she was delivered of the child; at which juncture, Brahma himself attended, with a golden vessel in his hand, on which he laid the child, and delivered it to Eendra, by whom it was committed to the charge of a female attendant, upon which the

child, alighting from her arms, walked seven paces, whence it was taken up by Mahamaya, and carried to her house; and, on the ensuing morning, news were circulated of a child being born in the rajah's family. At this time, Tapaswi Muni, who, residing in the woods, devoted his time to the worship of the deity, learned by inspiration that Buddha was come to life in the rajah's palace. He flew through the air to the rajah's residence, where, sitting on a throne, he said, 'I have repaired hither for the purpose of visiting the child.' Buddha was, accordingly, brought into his presence; the Muni observed two feet fixed on his head, and, divining something both of good and bad import, began to weep and to laugh alternately. The rajah then questioned him with regard to his present impulse, to whom he answered, 'I must not reside in the same place with Buddha, when he shall arrive at the rank of Avatar: this is the cause of my present affliction: but I am even now affected with gladness by his presence, as I am hereby absolved from all my transgressions.' The Muni then departed; and, after five days had elapsed, he assembled four Pandits for the purpose of calculating the destiny of the child, three of whom divined, that, as he had marks on his hands resembling a wheel, he would, at length, become a rajah Chacraverti; another divined that he would arrive at the dignity of Avatar.

"The boy was now named Sacya, and nothing important occurred till he had attained the age of sixteen years, at which period it happened that the rajah Chuhidan had a daughter named Vasutara, whom he had engaged not to give in marriage to any one till such time as a suitor should be found who could brace a certain bow in his possession, which, hitherto, many rajahs had attempted to accomplish without effect. Sacya now succeeded in the attempt, and, accordingly, obtained the rajah's daughter in marriage, with whom he repaired to his own royal residence.

"One day, as certain mysteries were revealed to him, he formed the design of relinquishing his dominion; at which time a son was born in his house, whose name was Raghu. Sacya then left his palace with only one attendant and a horse, and, having crossed the river

Ganga, arrived at Balucali, where, having directed his servant to leave him, and carry away his horse, he laid aside his armour.

"When the world was created, there appeared five flowers, which Brahma deposited in a place of safety; three of them were afterwards delivered to the three Thacurs, and one was presented to Sacya, who discovered that it contained some pieces of wearing-apparel, in which he clothed himself, and adopted the manners and life of a mendicant. A traveller one day passed by him, with eight bundles of grass on his shoulders, and, addressing him, said, 'A long period of time has elapsed since I have seen the Thacur; but now, since I have the happiness to meet him, I beg to present him an offering consisting of these bundles of grass.' Sacya, accordingly, accepted the grass, and reposed on it. At that time there suddenly appeared a golden temple, containing a chair of wrought gold; and the height of the temple was thirty cubits, upon which Brahma alighted, and held a canopy over the head of Sacya; at the same time Eendra descended with a large fan in his hand, and Naga, the rajah of serpents, with sandals in his hand, together with the four tutelar deities of the four corners of the universe, who all attended to do him service and reverence. At this time, likewise, the chief of Assoors, with his forces, arrived, riding on an elephant, to give battle to Sacya, upon which Brahma, Eendra, and the other deities, deserted him and vanished. Sacya, observing that he was left alone, invoked the assistance of the earth, who, attending at his summons, brought an inundation over all the ground, whereby the Assoor and his forces were vanquished, and compelled to retire.

"At this time, five holy scriptures descended from above, and Sacya was dignified with the title of Buddha-Avatar. The scriptures confer powers of knowledge and retrospection, the ability of accomplishing the impulses of the heart, and of carrying into effect the words of the mouth. Sacya resided here, without breaking his fast, twenty-one days, and then returned to his own country, where he presides over rajahs, governing them with care and equity."

Of the account given of this curious

ment to be lost; for that the very same day they should quit Dwaraka, it would be deluged by the ocean; and if any inhabitant loitered there, he must perish. That whole night was passed by Arjoon in weeping; he rose early the next morning, and after bathing was going to see Vasudeva, when he met all the women running out of the house, shrieking, beating their breasts, and tearing their hair. Vasudeva had expired that same night, and fourteen of his wives were standing around him, among whom were Yasodha, mother of Creeshna, and Roheenē, mother of Balhadur. Arjoon was, at this news, again for a time bereft of his senses; but Creeshna's wives coming to him, roused him from his trance, and told him there was no time for useless weeping, as he had Vasudeva's funeral to direct, and to provide for their own departure. Arjoon accordingly had the funeral-pile prepared in the very place where Creeshna had performed the Aswammedha-Yug, as Vasudeva had desired in his life time. Four of his wives burnt themselves with his corpse. Arjoon next came to the fatal field of dispute, where he had fresh cause to mourn over the lifeless remains of his slaughtered friends, Predemne, and Creeshna's other sons, brothers, &c., all of whose bodies he caused to be burnt. Search was also made for the earthly portions of what once was Creeshna and Balhadur. These also he solemnly committed to the flames. After he had finished these melancholy ceremonies, on the sixth day Arjoon ordered that all the people, men, women, and children, should quit the devoted city of Dwaraka, and take the road to Eendraput. Accordingly, they all left Dwaraka; Creeshna's 16,000 wives also, and all their servants and maids in very great numbers; and before them went Vejre, the son of Anaroodhe, while Arjoon brought up the rear. On the same day on which Arjoon left the city, the agitated deep began to swell, and rising higher and higher, even to the roofs of the loftiest edifices of Dwaraka, overwhelmed them in the sight of all the people, who, with the utmost trepidation and horror, lest the spreading waves should overtake them, travelled with all possible haste to a place where five streams unite with the river Indus, and there they halted. The people of

that quarter were all thieves and plunderers, who, seeing so many beautiful women and so much valuable treasure slightly guarded, attacked the caravan, in spite of Arjoon's remonstrances and threats, and began to hurry away the women and plunder the baggage. Arjoon now attempted to string his bow Gandeewa, but was a long time before he could succeed. He then put an arrow to the string, but with all his strength could not draw the bow. He then pulled at his sword, but could not unsheath it. In the mean time, every thief, at his option, took one of Creeshna's wives, and bore them in triumph away. Arjoon, with great difficulty, at last drew his bow, and shot an arrow; but whereas formerly one arrow would do prodigious execution, and his quiver remained always inexhaustible, his arrows now were soon spent, and almost wholly without effect. He next began to strike at the thieves with his bow Gandeewa, but the effect was trifling. The villains with ease carried off the women and the booty before his face; and Arjoon, exhausted with labour and grief, sat down to weep. Some few, however, of the women, and a small part of the treasure were still remaining, and Arjoon, in an agony of despair, knelt down to pray; when, finding his strength a little restored, he drew his sword and killed a few of the plunderers, and rescued some of the women. Ordering his people to place these and the remaining baggage on the carriages again, he then proceeded towards Hastanapoor and Eendraput. When they came to Koorookshetre, the son of Keret-Brema came out to meet them, and him they established in the government of Meerene and sovereignty of that country. After taking care of Koorookshetre, they came to Eendraput, and Arjoon settled the government of that city and its dependencies on Vejre Natha, son of Anaroodhe. In Koorookshetre, five of Creeshna's wives, Roke-meuee, Yamoonetee, Seebeesa, Heimoottee, and Kandharee, whose father was of the country of Kandhar, (Candahur,) burnt themselves; while Sete-Bame, with some others, invested themselves with the habits of Sanyassi's, and, forsaking the world, retired into the deserts to pass their lives in solitude and prayer.

Concise Additional Observations on the Avatar of Creeshna.

The two introductory chapters to the Life of Creeshna have sufficiently shewn it to be a compound of some traditional prediction, alluding to a great spiritual, but obscure, character, about to arise from the womb of time, the preserver of the world from crimes and punishments, and the history of some ancient hero; in all probability of that very Rama who forms so conspicuous a portion of the Avatar. Through the whole of it, however, there runs such frequent reference to the power and operations of the SOLAR DEITY; he combats both in youth and age with monsters so much resembling those of the sphere, with bulls, dragons, serpents, wolves, crows, and others, enrolled among the forty-eight oldest constellations; he maintains such dreadful contests with enemies in the form of tempests, whirlwinds, hurricanes, and other aerial prodigies, that for a while envelop and obscure him; and, what is not the least

remarkable circumstance in his history, he is so constantly represented as absorbing into himself, or, as the fable expresses it, receiving into his mouth, the noxious fires and devouring conflagrations which hostilely assail his comrades; that the astronomical relation of his character to that planet cannot be passed over unobserved, or its existence denied, though it is impossible to draw any exact parallel. That Osiris, too, the black divinity of Egypt, and Creeshna, the sable shepherd-god of Mathura, have the striking similitude of character, intimated by Mr. Wilford, cannot be disputed, any more than that Creeshna, from his rites continuing so universally to flourish over India from such remote periods down to the present day, was the prototype, and Osiris the mythological copy. Both are renowned legislators and conquerors, contending equally with physical and spiritual foes; both are denominated THE SUN; both descend to the shades, and both raise the dead to life.

NO. XII.—THE NINTH AVATAR, OR THAT OF BUDDHA, INCARNATE FOR THE PURPOSE OF PUTTING A PERIOD TO SANGUINARY SACRIFICES OF MEN AND BEASTS.



The ninth Avatar, or that of Buddha, commenced, according to Sir William Jones, in the year 1014, before Christ. Buddha, however, must have flourished at a period much earlier, if, as is intimated in another part of the Asiatic Researches, he appeared on earth towards the commencement of the Cali-

Yug. Possibly Buddha may be the name of a dynasty, as were Bali and Rama; a dynasty extending from very remote cras down to periods comparatively recent in their romantic annals; and, in fact, Buddha is to be found in a preceding page, at the head of the great lunar dynasty of India. His Avatar is asserted to have taken place for the express purpose of putting a stop to the bloody sacrifices with which the Brahmins had polluted the pristine purity and simplicity of their religion. A rock-altar, therefore, that altar on which the blood of animals had profusely flowed, was sacred to him throughout Asia; and he himself was often represented by a huge columnar black stone, black being, among the ancients, a colour emblematical of the inscrutable nature of the deity. How wide his fame, and the mild rites of his religion were diffused will be evident, when it is considered that the Indian Buddha is the Budso and Dai-Bod, that is, Deva-Buddha, of the Japanese, whose history and

Avatar, and the doctrines of Buddha, in the Ayeen Akbery, the following is the substance:—His father, according to Abul Fazil, was Rajah Siddown, prince of Bahar, and his mother, named Maia, was delivered of him through her navel. At his birth there shone forth a wonderful light; the earth trembled, and the water of the Ganges rose and fell in a most astonishing manner. The very hour he was born he walked seven steps, and discoursed with an eloquence that ravished the hearts of his hearers. The early part of his life is said to have been spent in retirement from the world, and contempt of its grandeur; in acts of severe penance, and in the incessant worship of Mahadeva. He had likewise the gift of prophecy, and could alter the course of nature. It was predicted of Buddha that he should introduce a new religion into the world. The prediction was fulfilled, and the leading principle of that benevolent religion was, that the horrid custom of offering up men and beasts in sacrifice should be abolished. He is said to have had above eighty thousand disciples, who propagated his doctrines through all the neighbouring kingdoms; and ten only of these disciples published five thousand volumes in honour of their master. At the close of a life, whose duration was one hundred years, consumed in acts of exemplary piety and beneficence, it is asserted that Buddha, convoking his disciples together, retracted the pious doctrines which he had, through the whole of that prolonged life, inculcated; telling them that the worship of any deity was mere delusion, for that, in fact, no deity presided over the universe; that everything is the effect of blind chance, and that the world is eternal, but subject, at stated periods,

to alternate destruction and renovation. The sacred character of an Avatar, however, as we before observed, absolutely forbids the possibility of his speaking in this impious manner, though doctrines very similar are imputed to Buddha by some of the more inveterate of the sect of the Brahmins; and it is in part to explain this difficulty, as well as to account for some other contradictions in his character, that the existence of a second Buddha has been supposed, who flourished many centuries after the first, and who imported those principles into India from Egypt, where Plato, in his *Timæus*, has expressly asserted that such doctrines were maintained.

The Avatar of Buddha is the last that has appeared. It has already been observed, that the Indian Yugs are very regular and artificially disposed; the human stature, together with human life and human virtue, becoming less and less in a kind of geometrical progression from a hundred thousand years to one hundred years, the brief period of man's existence in the Cali age. In the same manner the number of Avatars in each Yug decreases arithmetically from four, and consequently the termination of Buddha's terrestrial residence concludes the third age, himself and Creeshna being the only Avatars that become incarnate in the Dwapar-Yug. That Yug consists, according to Brahminical computation, of one million six hundred thousand years; and it is scarcely necessary again to state, that all the Yugs are merely astronomical periods, founded on the basis of the precession of equinoxes of fifty-four seconds, more or less times repeated, according to the number of Avatars in each Yug.

No. XIII.—THE CALCI, OR TENTH AVATAR.



The Calci, or final Avatar, exhibits to us Veesnu incarnate in the form of an armed warrior, for the purpose of dissolving the universe. The duration of the Cali period, or Yug, in which this is the only incarnation, has already been stated to be 432,000 years, during which scarcely any vestiges of justice or piety will remain among mankind, who, degraded equally in stature as intellectual vigour, are considered at the end of

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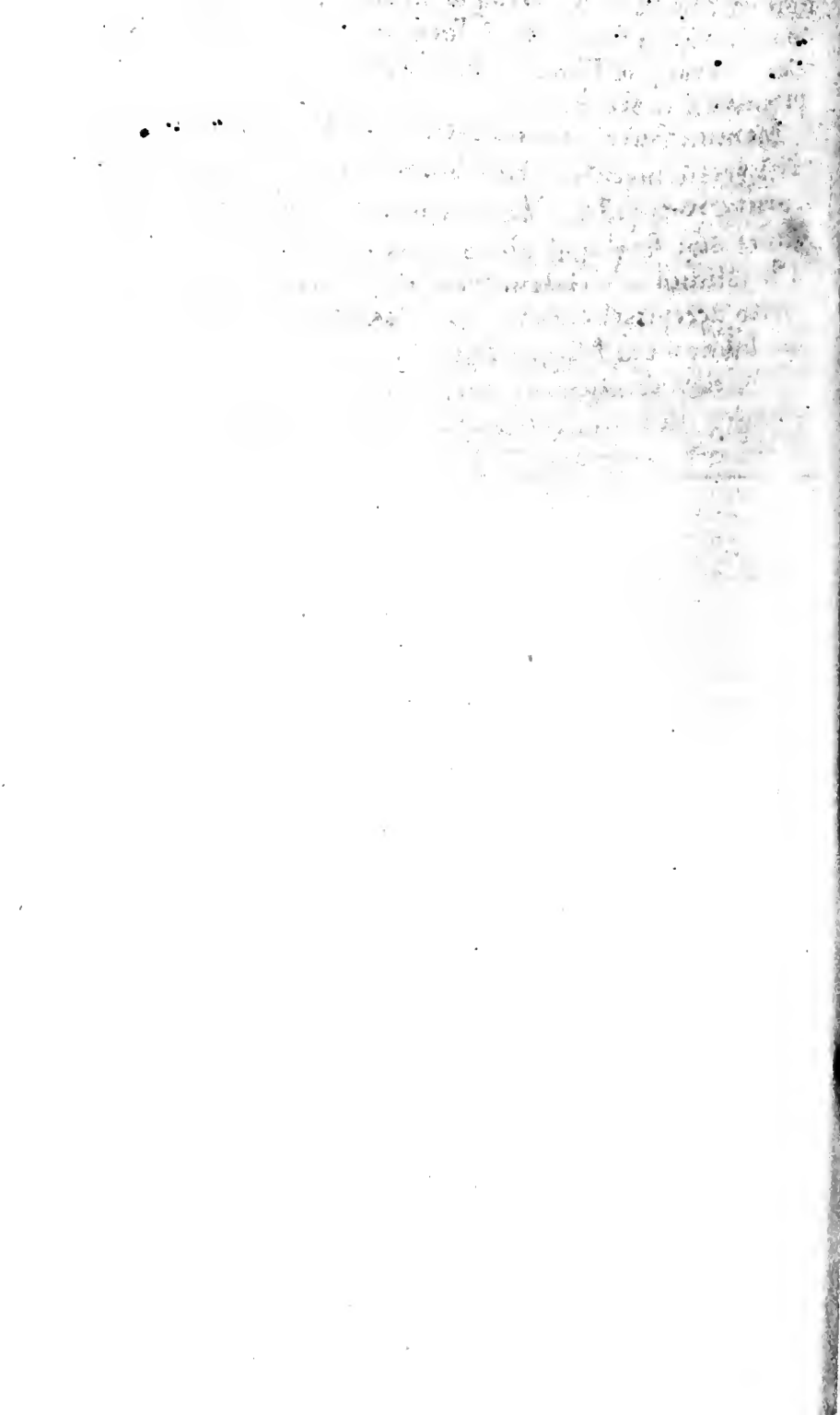
that period as ripe for the scythe that is doomed to mow them down. The Calci, it is recorded, will be incarnate in the house of the Brahmin Bishenjun, the apparent offspring of that sage by his wife Awejsirdenne, and will be born in the city of Sambal, towards the close of the Cali, in the month of Vaisach, the Scorpion. In one hand he is represented as bearing aloft a "cimeter, blazing like a comet," to destroy all the impure, who then shall inhabit the earth; and, in the other, he displays a circular ornament, or ring, the emblem of cycles perpetually revolving, and of which the existing one, including the ten grand Avatars above-recorded, is on the point of being finally terminated. The Calci hero appears leading a white horse, richly caparisoned, adorned with jewels, and furnished with wings, possibly to mark the rapid flight of time. The horse is represented as standing not on terrestrial, but æthelial ground, on three feet only, holding up, without intermission, the right fore leg, with which, say the Brahmins, when he stamps with fury upon the earth, the present period shall close, and the dissolution of nature take place.

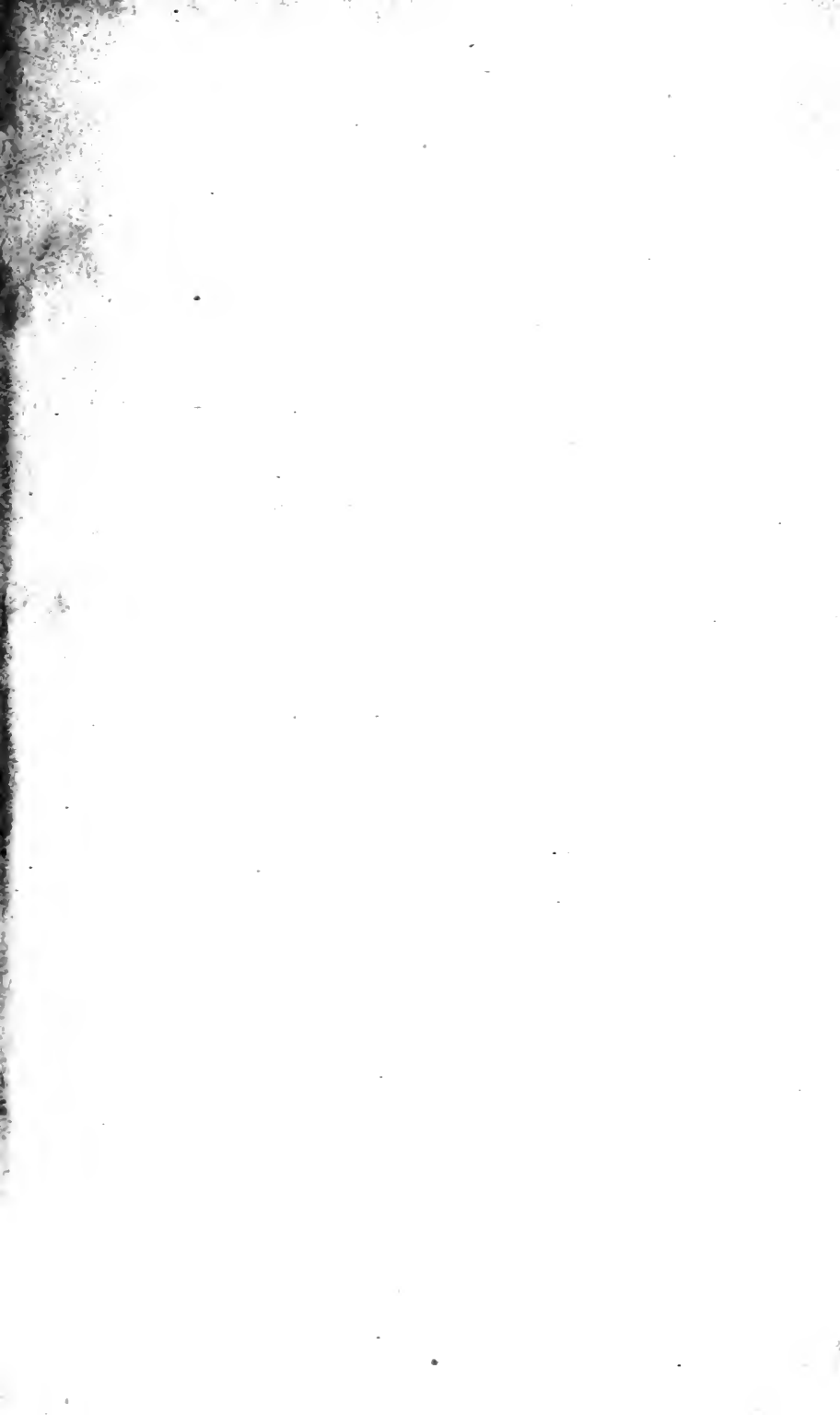
Note for page 86. - According to the accounts of Isaac Vossius, a manuscript of the works of Porphyry is preserved in the Medicean library at Florence, but kept so secret that no one is permitted to see it.

Memini Salvium dixisse, spem sibi factam talis libri, sed pretio ingenti. Fuit his pestilentium ejusmodi scriptorum percupidus: ita sane multum laboravit ut compararet sibi Porphyrii libros, quos ille quondam adversus Christianam pietatem evomuit, ubi ex Gerhardi Jo. Vossii filio accepisset clanculum illos asservari hodie Florentiae in bibliotheca Magni Ducis.

Ritmeieri Comingiana epistolica, p. 23

Marsh's Michaelis Introduction to the New Testament Vol. I. Pt. II.
p. 367 in-8 Cambridge 1793.





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